

Council takes step toward another city viaduct

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

Thursday, 15 October 2009 22:04 -



Proposals sought from firms wanting to do transportation study.

Another viaduct and closed crossing in the city could be in the works.

At their Oct. 6 meeting, Gothenburg City Council decided to request professional consulting services for a transportation study.

“Alternative routes over the railroad tracks are something we’ve had in the budget,” said city administrator Bruce Clymer. “If you still want to go ahead with it, we’ll go out for proposals.”

Clymer said the Railroad Transportation Safety District, which is funded with tax dollars, will offer up to \$45,000 for a study estimated to cost \$60,000.

The city would pay the difference.

Clymer noted that the city’s comprehensive plan includes viaducts on the east or west side of the city.

A transportation study would bring in people affected by a viaduct, the location of a viaduct, potential closures of existing Union Pacific Railroad crossings and more.

An engineering firm, certified by the state to do such a study, would do the research and analysis.

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The last time the council talked about a transportation study, Clymer said it was reported in The Times and he received several calls from engineering companies interested in doing one for Gothenburg.

Nevertheless, he said it takes a long time to study and build a viaduct.

“Don’t expect anything to happen until four to five years,” Clymer said. “You get on a priority list.”

Gothenburg would rate high for its high train-traffic location and low because the city already has one viaduct, he explained.

He added that an engineering firm is not selected by price.

“You select who you think will do the best job and negotiate the price,” Clymer told the council.

If the city decides to construct an overpass, city council president Jeff Kennedy asked if two railroad crossings would be closed.

Clymer said they would if the city expects financial assistance from state and federal governments.

Proposals must be submitted to the city by Nov. 6.

Pet owners may want to insure their dogs and cats don’t wander after the council increased animal impound fees from \$10 to \$15.

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Animal pickup by the city went up from \$25 to \$35.

The city administrator explained that fees have risen for city pounds like the Gothenburg Animal Hospital because of state legislation which requires a license and inspections.

In other action, the council approved a contract with Miller and Associates to provide architectural services for an addition to and renovation of the police department.

The cost is estimated at \$10,000 for the engineering firm to design a 30x48-foot garage and interior remodeling and to oversee construction.

In other business, the council:

- approved payment to Miller and Associates Consulting Engineers of Kearney of: \$288 for Jefferson St. paving, \$175 for Fifth Street paving and \$3,937 and \$1,877 for street improvements in 2008.
- voted to pay Dawson Area Development \$4,500 for administration of a downtown revitalization grant and \$3,000 for administration of a grant for 2008 street improvements.
- appointed Jason Wagner to the city cemetery board. He replaces Sheryl Munster who retired from the board.
- learned that Stonco, the company that sold and etched a stone directional sign on the south end of Gothenburg, had covered up original writing on the sign that city officials thought was too small for passersby to see. They then engraved larger letters. Mayor Joyce Hudson said the pillars at Ehmen Park have also been repaired and an outside coating will be applied.
- heard that they were invited, along with city officials, to a flood plain meeting with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) officials on Oct. 14 in Lexington.

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