



City of Verona

Public Works Department

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Eastside Interceptor Gravity Sanitary Sewer Project Responses to questions/comments received 12/18/2020

This document includes responses to many of the questions and comments received regarding the Eastside Interceptor project. Responses are grouped by the channel through which the question/comment was received and then by general topic area.

Responses to general statements made in emails or during public comment from the Council Meeting on 12-14-2020:

1. **Work zone**

- a. *All work is being completed on public property, within acquired easements, or existing easements. No work is being conducted on private property.*

2. **Increased communication**

- a. *A neighborhood Zoom meeting has been scheduled for Jan. 13, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. where project staff, including the City of Verona, Dane County, Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District, and the Ice Age Trail Alliance, will go into more detail regarding the history, route, Ice Age Trail, restoration efforts, and Dane County in-stream work.*

<https://zoom.us/j/92894528767>

or by phone

+1 312 626 6799

Webinar ID: 928 9452 8767

- b. *Project staff has scheduled monthly neighborhood (public) progress meeting that will occur on the third Wednesday of the month at 5 p.m. starting January 20, 2021 and running through September 15, 2021. This meeting will include a schedule update on the project and then open dialog for questions from the public.*

<https://zoom.us/j/98510880099>

or by phone

+1 312 626 6799

Webinar ID: 985 1088 0099

- c. Questions are welcomed at all times as stated on the [project website](#) and in all other notifications.

3. Erosion control

- a. Erosion control plans were prepared for the project and all permits were obtained to perform the work.
- b. Scheduling of the erosion control measures for the area north of S. Main Street occurred the week of Nov. 30. The schedule for work to commence the week of Dec. 14, 2020. All erosion control measures are installed as of Dec. 18, 2020.
- c. All erosion control is monitored weekly and after a precipitation event throughout the project.
- d. Staff from any of the regulatory agencies has the right to enter the project at any time if they feel the need to for an inspection. The WDNR is scheduled to perform an inspection in January (this was scheduled prior to construction) to coordinate constructability techniques for the project.

4. Tree Species

- a. The vast majority of trees that were removed for the project were volunteer species. The most common species include cottonwood, box elder, willow, silver maple, elm, and mulberry. Many of the trees between S. Main Street and the Lincoln Street covered bridge were re-growth from the last sewer project that was completed in 1996. The oaks along the project corridor are concentrated along the eastern slope of the existing grade adjacent to S. Hillcrest. Regrettably, there were a handful of oak trees that were within the project limits, but more specifically within or directly adjacent to the edge of the pipe trench excavation zone. The vast majority of the slope remains unimpacted and heavily wooded. During the design of the project, Staff worked to minimize the impacts as much as possible. Staff did preserve the pine strip just east of the Lincoln Street Bridge, and also a cluster of trees/pines adjacent to and south of the Ice Age Trail bridge that crosses Badger Mill Creek. The ultimate goal of the restoration effort will be to re-populate with native hardwood species that will thrive in this environment.

Questions/statements received via email from the public in reference to the Council Meeting on 12-14-2020 with a response from City and MMSD:

1. Project schedule

Contradicting information regarding the project schedule – DNR cited saying project being done in fall/winter to avoid high erosion season in warmer months, but project schedule continuing through May/June for certain.

- a. WDNR is fully aware of the project schedule as this was presented to them during the pre-application meeting and within the permits.
- b. The goal of the project is to take advantage of as many fall/winter months as possible and during times of low precipitation and frozen ground to reduce soil

erosion and water management and risks during construction.

2. Blasting

Pause blasting until questions about the process are answered. Where and how much blasting will be done, and how will it impact the Badger Mill Creek as well as homes in the area and the hillsides and trees.

- a. Blasting was anticipated for the project from just north of S. Main Street toward Bruce Street based on the soils investigation performed in 2019.*
- b. The contractor fulfilled their statutory requirement of notifying properties that blasting may/will occur while they were performing their detailed site investigation of excavating test holes along the project. Their site investigation concluded that **blasting is not required.***
- c. Project staff was notified by the contractor on Friday, Dec. 11, 2020 that NO blasting is required on this project.*

3. Site flagging

Were mistakes made in the breadth of the clear cut, either in site flagging or in execution of the work? If so, how will mistakes be reduced as the project moves forward?

- a. Site flagging was placed in the field as identified on the engineering drawings and walked through with staff during the project and as progress was being made.*
- b. Please see responses to other answers regarding staff count and clearing width.*

Public comment questions/statements received during the Council Meeting 12-14-2020 with a response from City and MMSD:

1. Plan review

Was there an external review panel that contributed to the project plan? If so, did they create a report that can be shared? If no review, why not?

- a. The City of Verona and Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) each have wastewater master plans identifying capital improvement projects that are programed into their budgets. The City of Verona's most current wastewater master plan was prepared by AECOM which started in 2016 and was finalized in January 2019.*
- b. The City's wastewater master plan results are then detailed along potential routes where the sewer pipes can be constructed within a Design Study Report. This is an alternatives analysis that is conducted by the design consultant, which was Short Elliot Hendrickson.*
- c. After the route selection is determined, a pre-application meeting(s) was conducted with the permitting agencies to propose the desired route and determine any environmental concerns they have and what permits are required for the project. This meeting included Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Army Corps of Engineers staff.*

- d. *During the preparation of the construction documents, the applicable permits were submitted to the appropriate agencies; we then received permits to proceed with construction of the project.*
- e. *MMSD has a Business Case Analysis detailing the need for increased pump station and force main capacity. The Business Case Analysis includes a rough overview of potential force main routing and a high-level alternatives analysis. The Business Case Analysis is published with MMSD's annual Budget and Capital Improvements Plan documents, [which can be found on their website.](#)*

PLEASE NOTE:

All wastewater that is collected by the City of Verona local sewer system is discharged to a pumping station owned by MMSD on Bruce Street. From Bruce Street the waste water flows through 12 miles of sewer pipes until it reaches the treatment plant.

Why were large trees marked on plans? Was it to make sure they were preserved (they were not) or to make a note that they would need extra equipment to take them down?

- a. *Large trees are identified on construction plans so they can be used as points of reference in the field, show the contractor what varying sizes to allow them to properly bid, and to price their work. If they are to be preserved, they are accompanied with a note on the plan specifically stating that they are to remain and construction fence is placed around them.*

What is the foot traffic plan going to be through the area during construction?

- a. *There will be no foot traffic in the corridor when the contractor is working to ensure the safety of the general public.*
- b. *The Ice Age Trail has a marked detour route that will be in place for the duration of the project.*
- c. *The connection between Lincoln Street and S. Hillcrest Drive was closed during the clearing and grubbing operations and during the installation of erosion control items. This connection is reopened as of 12/18/2020. This connection will be closed again in spring/summer of 2021 when construction nears this area.*
- d. *The Glacier Ridge Trail Bridge was closed for clearing and grubbing operations and during the installation of erosion control items. This connection was reopened as of 12/18/2020. This connection will be closed again in spring/summer of 2021 when construction nears this area.*

2. Tree clearing

Signs posted with info about how big of an area would be cleared (60 ft) were misleading/incorrect; has measured areas of 100+ ft that have been cleared.

- a. *Unfortunately, these signs were placed by the Ice Age Trail in late August without verifying the accuracy of the information with the City. Once the City was notified of the signs City staff contacted the Ice Age Trail and the signs were replaced by Ice Age Trail volunteer staff in the middle of September. All parties understand this error*

has caused confusion. The common width clearance is 100 feet, with variations depending on specific locations along the project.

How much is being cleared (60 ft vs 100+ ft)

- a. *100 feet is the common width of the sewer project corridor. There are locations where pinch points occur that are narrower to accommodate constructability challenges due to topographic challenges and adjacent landscapes.*
- b. *There are also locations where local sewer connections are planned, which ultimately adds a perpendicular area to the common corridor to be cleared for the construction zone of that local sewer. There are eight of these local sewer connections: Fireman's Park, S. Main Street, Melody Circle, S. Hillcrest Drive, Lincoln Street cul-de-sac, Lincoln Street channel, Arbor Vitae Place, and Military Ridge Drive.*
 - i. *The statement regarding the point where corridor is 175 feet wide is where the interceptor and force main change directions from an east-west to a north-south bearing with creek crossings and facilitates a perpendicular connection to a local sewer that conveys waste water from the Melody Lane/Circle neighborhood.*
 - ii. *Also within the area north of the local sewer connection to Melody Lane is an existing water main we need access to perform underground utility locates on the water main during construction and for supporting (or temporary removal) the water main during installation of the sewer pipes. This water main had dense volunteer species over and adjacent to it that was removed for future restoration improvements.*
- c. *There is additional clearing outside of the sewer common corridor for work that was prepared by Dane County Parks staff that is included in construction contract.*

3. Transparency & Oversight

Wants more and continuing transparency and communication about the current plan with info provided in a way an average citizen can understand?

- a. *Another neighborhood meeting in being planned to go over project details.*
 - i. *See information under "Increased Communication" on the first page.*

Wants increased oversight and accountability on the project going forward.

- a. *The City has two inspectors to oversee the construction activities as of the first week of December. Additionally, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and Dane County Land & Water Resources Department has the right to inspect the site at any time.*
- b. *MMSD has inspectors to oversee construction of MMSD assets. MMSD inspectors' main focus is construction of the MMSD force main.*

4. Alternatives

Project should have used the old route on the north side of the creek because it had already been clear cut for Fireman's Park?

- a. *To construct the parallel pipelines on the north side of Badger Mill Creek between Fireman's Park and S. Main Street would have created the following constructability challenges:*
 - i. *WDNR wanted us to minimize the number and size of the pipe crossings of Badger Mill Creek; this would have added an additional crossing.*
 - ii. *There is an unstable excavation segment adjacent to the fill slope along the adjacent property to the north.*
 - iii. *Removal of the new Fireman's Park bike path. Yes, the path could have been delayed, but this would have eliminated the direct pedestrian access to the park from the north.*
 - 1. *Goal was to keep the path open during construction, which is occurring.*
 - iv. *More challenging site access for the trenchless installation under S. Main Street*
 - v. *Increased pipe length (for both City and MMSD)*
 - vi. *Additional clearing to facilitate construction*

Corridor restoration & preservation

Wants Ice Age trail to be kept as a nature trail.

- a. *The Ice Age Trail will remain an unpaved/separate path upon completion of this project. Coordination started with the Ice Age Trail in the winter of 2018/2019. A common corridor with offset paths was the goal from the beginning and remains the goal. As recently discussed between the City Parks Commission and Ice Age Trail, improvements have been preliminarily discussed but concluded that waiting until the sewer project was completed to ensure all parties had a clear understanding of the lay of the land to incorporate the necessary details.*

Long-term plans made by the city demonstrated a desire to protect the corridor for various environmental reasons, and these should have been a bigger consideration for whether or not the project went through this area

- a. *To maintain a gravity sewer system requires utilization of the natural topographic contour of a city, and this corridor is the low point for this half of the City. The original interceptor was constructed along this corridor in the 1960 for that exact reason to eliminate multiple lift stations. In 1996, MMSD constructed their force main in this common corridor as well.*

Have seen that some signs say that the area will be restored, and has seen restoration plans for land that's county-owned, but nothing from the City re: land south of the bridge

- a. *Restoration plans have been prepared for the area to be revegetated with native grasses. These are included in the construction plans.*
- b. *Additional details are going to be prepared for additional tree plantings that can occur, but communication with the Ice Age Trail needs to take place so we are coordinating and planning appropriately to eliminate redundant work.*

Spoke with Theran re: tree restoration and came away feeling that it was just an afterthought of the project; said that he was told it wouldn't be fair for all residents to pay for planting trees in the cleared area

- a. *Mr. Jacobson coordinated with Mr. Walker (Parks Director) knowing that other improvements to Ice Age Trail, trees, and/ or vegetation management would be conducted in the area during the future project with the Ice Age Trail. Jacobson's recommendation is to protect the sewer pipes to avoid additional maintenance and maximize the life expectancy of the pipe, and provide an access route to maintain the sewers which ultimately saves sanitary sewer rate payers money.*
- b. *City staff needs to be able to access the eastside interceptor sewer pipe with equipment for inspections, pipeline televising and cleaning, and repairs when necessary. his also includes access to the local sewer connection points adjacent to Melody Circle, S. Hillcrest Drive, Lincoln Street cul-de-sac, Lincoln Street Channel, Arbor Vitae Place, and Military Ridge Drive.*

Wants to see a plan for where trees will be planted for restoration at the end of the project.

- a. *Project staff and the City Parks Director are working with a landscape architect to develop a planting scheme for the corridor and will be presented in early 2021.*
- b. *Specific timing of any tree habitat installation would not occur until 2022 after completion of the sewer project and establishment of the vegetative ground cover. Also, most hardwood trees, especially oaks, can only be transplanted in the spring.*

City has recognized the value of the corridor in comprehensive plan, so it's shocking that the area has been cleared so carelessly and drastically

- a. *The value of this environmental corridor as it relates to the City Comprehensive Plan is in the quality of the stream, adjacent lands, and the continuity of the resource with Dane County lands to the north and Fireman's Park to the south. The long-term effect of this project will be to improve the resource by restoring native vegetation and reducing soil erosion into the stream. The majority of the native oak trees and upland portion of the corridor will be unaffected by construction activities.*

Comprehensive plan says hills/drumlins are fragile and should not be disturbed, and that the oak forest was original and the only one left in Verona.

- a. *The glacial features and native oak forest referred to in the comprehensive plan are the hillside area between the houses and base of the hill on the East View side of the creek; very little of this area will be disturbed during construction. Please note that some disturbance will occur due to the location of the existing force main and the need for the two sewer pipes to be installed all within the common corridor. There are still several other examples of native oak forest in Verona.*

Verona is lucky to have the Ice Age Trail and it's been highly valued this year with COVID, so it's painful to see the destruction that's happened

- a. *The City of Verona values the Ice Age Trail as well, which is why we have coordinated and partnered with them on this project and future projects for improvements. Ultimately, the Ice Age Trail will more useable and maintainable for all parties after the project(s) are completed. We understand it is hard to visualize that at this time due to the quick change in the landscape.*