



Council Communication

Office of the City Manager

Date

August 21, 2006

Agenda Item No. 49
Roll Call No. 06-
Communication No. 06-545
Submitted by: Jeb E. Brewer, P.E.
City Engineer

AGENDA HEADING:

Hearing on Court Avenue & Walnut Street Two-way Traffic Conversion: Resolution approving plans, specifications, form of contract documents, engineer's estimate, receive and file bids, and designating lowest responsible bidder as Concrete Technologies, Inc., Brad Baumler, President, \$196,239.50.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend the City Council hold a public hearing to allow for public input on the Court Avenue & Walnut Street Two-way Traffic Conversion and take the necessary actions as required by Iowa Code to authorize a contract for construction of the proposed project. This project provides for the conversion of Court Avenue between 5th Avenue and E. 7th Street, and Walnut Street between 2nd Avenue and Finkbine Drive from one-way to two-way traffic flow. This conversion has been recommended in downtown traffic studies. Only one bid was received for this project; however, the City Engineer recommends that the City Council proceed with the contract as discussed below.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$196,239.50 Construction Contract

Funding Source: 2006-2007 CIP, Page Street-12, Court Avenue Streetscape - Two-way Traffic Conversion, STR225, Being: FY 2006-2007 Tax Increment Funds

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

On November 22, 2004, the City Council approved a contract with the Center for Transportation Education and Research (CTRE) at Iowa State University to assist City staff in completing a review and analysis of three downtown roadways from one-way to two-way control being: Court Avenue from 2nd Avenue to 5th Avenue; 2nd Avenue from Court Avenue to Martin Luther King, Jr. Parkway; and 3rd Street from Court Avenue to Martin Luther King, Jr. Parkway. On February 20, 2006, the City Council approved the "One-Way to Two-Way Traffic Study" final report, including the Steering Committee recommendations to convert Court Avenue to two-way traffic from 2nd Avenue to 5th Avenue and to convert 4th Street to two-way traffic from Walnut Street to Court Avenue, and directed staff to hold a public meeting for the conversion of E. Court Avenue from 2nd Avenue to E. 7th Street.

On May 25, 2006, the Traffic and Transportation Division held a public information meeting to present the background for conversion of one-way streets to two-way traffic, explain the proposal to convert E. Court Avenue and E. Walnut Street to two-way traffic, and receive input and questions. The meeting was well attended, with citizens and representatives from businesses and other property owners. Those

who attended the meeting, and those who could not attend but provided input, supported the conversion of both Court Avenue and Walnut Street to two-way traffic to improve traffic circulation and access.

On July 24, 2006, under Roll Call No. 06-1424, the City Council received and filed plans, specifications, form of contract documents, and City Engineer's estimate for the construction of the Court Avenue & Walnut Street Two-way Traffic Conversion. Before the City Council can enter into a contract, it must hold a public hearing and approve the proposed plans, specifications, and form of contract documents and engineer's estimate for construction of the Court Avenue & Walnut Street Two-way Traffic Conversion, 06-2006-025. The improvement includes constructing P.C.C base, curb, sidewalks, brick pavers, H.M.A. surfacing, median, irrigation system modifications, traffic signal modifications, and other incidental items; in accordance with the contract documents, including Plans File Nos. 464-001/036, on Court Avenue between E. 6th Street and 5th Avenue, 5th Avenue at Mulberry Street, Walnut Street at 2nd Avenue, and E. Walnut Street at E. 6th Street, Des Moines, Iowa.

Only one sealed bid was received for said improvement. It was submitted by Concrete Technologies, Inc., Urbandale, IA, in the amount of \$196,239.50, which is 17% over the Engineer's estimate of \$167,465. Three companies indicated that they were interested in bidding this project when they obtained plans and specifications. Engineering Department staff contacted the two companies that did not bid to determine why they did not submit a bid, as well as another potential bidder, and received the following comments:

- One company indicated that they were too busy working on other projects this fall.
- The other company indicated that the project contained very little work for their company and would therefore primarily be a project management job. Since they were short on project managers, they did not pursue the project.
- Another potential bidder was contacted and indicated that their company has adequate work this season, was not looking very hard for additional work this fall, and missed that the project was being bid.

This project does contain considerable project management work to coordinate the various subcontractors for traffic signals, asphalt work, brick pavers, irrigation system modifications, pavement markings, sidewalk, street light modifications, curb, subbase construction, utility coordination, and traffic control. The project is located downtown, so large volumes of traffic must be maintained within the construction site and access to downtown businesses must also be maintained. As a result, the project is not very attractive to contractors that already have a full construction schedule this season, and therefore, can be very selective regarding the projects that they select to bid. These factors become more apparent when comparing the three bids received for the E. 30th Street and State Avenue Intersection Realignment project (which was also bid on August 8th), and only one bid was received on this Court Avenue & Walnut Street Two-way Traffic Conversion project. The downtown community desires to have this two-way traffic conversion completed this fall; therefore, a relatively short construction completion provision was included in the contract, which also adds to the project complexity and cost. On the E. 30th Street project, the contractor had the option to start and complete the project before winter or delay start of the construction until next spring.

This project has received a high level of interest and support from the downtown business community and the public, including a strong interest in completing the conversion this fall. The two-way traffic flow will significantly improve access and circulation to new developments in the East Village area and the Court Avenue District, especially the new Science Center. While the bid is over the project estimate, as explained above, it is still well below the project budget and available funding of \$227,000 in the CIP, due to further refinements of the project details during final design, including re-use of as much existing signal equipment as possible, compared to the budget estimate.

The City Engineer recommends that the City Council accept the single bid for this project, and has determined that the lowest responsible, responsive bid for the construction of said improvement was submitted by Concrete Technologies, Inc., Brad Baumler, President, 3809 109th Street, Suite D, Urbandale, IA, 50322 in the amount of \$196,239.50. The Finance Director has determined that funds are available as stated above.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: July 24, 2006

Roll Call Number: 06-1424

Action: [Court](#) Avenue & Walnut Street Two-Way Traffic Conversion – Receiving of bids, (8-8-06), and Setting date of hearing, (8-21-06). (Construction Estimate - \$167,465). ([Council Communication No. 06-468](#)) Moved by Hensley to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

Date: February 20, 2006

Roll Call Number: 06-404

Action: Court Avenue Two-Way Traffic Study – 2nd Avenue to 5th Avenue Final Report and Recommendations. ([Council Communication No. 06-090](#)) Moved by Hensley to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Date: September 20, 2005

Roll Call Number: N/A

Action: Traffic Safety Committee approved preliminary recommendations.

Date: February 14, 2006

Roll Call Number: N/A

Action: Traffic Safety Committee approved final report and recommendations.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Partial payments to the contractor and final acceptance of work.