

# Asphalt program enables more street repairs

Jason Smathers, Sheboygan Press Media 6:49 p.m. CDT September 2, 2015



(Photo: Gary C. Klein/Sheboygan Press Media)

A tweak to three proposed resurfacing projects means the 2016 budget can cover the repair of more than just one major street.

The capital budget approved at Tuesday's Capital Improvements Commission meeting included three street repair projects totaling more than \$790,000: North Sixth Street from Niagara to Superior Avenue, South 17th Street from Indiana Avenue to Union, and Saemann Avenue from Calumet to North 21st.

Those projects previously totaled more than \$2.8 million, but that was when repairs were calculated under the normal repair process. Now that the city is using hot-in-place asphalt recycling and is focusing only on resurfacing the roads rather than a defacto complete reconstruction, the cost of those projects has been cut by

more than two-thirds. Indiana to Union, for instance, was originally slated to cost \$1.3 million, but now comes in at only \$305,252.

Director of Public Works Dave Biebel said the projects won't include full utility and curb and gutter repairs, but they will improve the "driveability" of the roads.

"Is it on par with the resurfacing such as South Eighth Street? No, but it's a vast improvement over what we have," Biebel said

Hot-in-place asphalt recycling was used in recent weeks as a pilot program for several city streets. The process comes in at half the cost of normal resurfacing projects, which is why it's being incorporated into 2016 repairs. The process takes existing asphalt streets that have developed cracks and rejuvenates the asphalt through extreme heating and the addition of new oil.

The city's annual borrowing limit is set at \$3 million, but \$1.5 million of that is already accounted for through a combination of motor vehicle purchases, repairs for the Eighth Street bridge, setting aside money for a future citywide assessment and \$200,000 for contingency funds. That left the city with only \$1.48 million to spend on remaining requests.

The commission also agreed to fund initial city hall design and possible construction to the tune of \$350,000. The funding is in anticipation of the city's decision to possibly move city hall to a different location or build a new home for government operations. They also set aside \$300,000 for the fire department to buy several self-contained breathing apparatus units, \$20,000 for new defibrillators and \$24,600 to continue upgrading the city's civil defense sirens and controls.

The commission left about \$2 million of capital requests on the cutting room floor, including \$1.3 million for two road projects, \$125,000 for new "jaws of life" for the fire department, \$190,000 for Emerald Ash Borer management and tree planting, \$285,000 for boiler replacement in Mead Library and \$100,000 for body cameras for Sheboygan Police Department patrol officers.

The capital budget still has to get approvals from the City Finance Committee as well as common council.

— Reach Jason Smathers at 920-453-5167 and [jmathers1@sheboyganpress.com](mailto:jmathers1@sheboyganpress.com) (<mailto:jmathers1@sheboyganpress.com>); or @SmathersPress on twitter.

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