

City plans host of street projects in 2013

Written by KRISTYN HALBIG ZIEHM
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Although the City of Port Washington won't undertake any new street projects next year, it is already planning for work in 2013.

The Board of Public Works on Tuesday agreed to apply for a \$41,500 Department of Transportation local road improvement grant that would be used to resurface Cedar drive, court and circle on the west side of the city.

The grant would require a city match, bringing the total available for the project to \$83,000, Public Works Director Rob Vanden Noven said, noting that the total project cost is estimate at \$195,200.

Officials have said they are willing to borrow to fund road projects again in 2013, Vanden Noven said.

The board reviewed the city's five-year street plan, which must be submitted with the grant application.

The plan calls for the city to resurface a number of streets in 2013 at an estimated cost of \$700,000.

They include Washington Street between Milwaukee and Wisconsin streets, Terrace Drive south of Woodview Circle, Oak, Sumac, Elm and Willow courts, Sauk Drive from Pierre Lane to the end, Parkway Drive from Norport Drive to the dead end and from Jacque Lane to Parknoll Drive and Westport Drive from Cedar to Portview and south of Second Avenue.

Vanden Noven said he selected Cedar for the grant funding because it came closest to meeting the \$83,000 in grant and matching funds.

But Ald. Jim Vollmar questioned the methodology, saying the city should first look at fixing major streets that need work, then at secondary road and only after that at neighborhood roads "that are just serving a few homes."

Cedar is basically a neighborhood road, he said, while other streets in the city are in worse shape and handle more cars each day.

But Vanden Noven said those streets require reconstruction, a more costly project than the resurfacing that's envisioned in 2013.

"To make the funding go as far as possible, the city will be resurfacing a number of roads in 2013," he said.

Because many of the streets that will be resurfaced in 2013 are in the Westport Meadows subdivision, the city will also realize economies of scale when doing this work, Vanden Noven added.

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“Even though they’re not well traveled, they’re in horrible shape,” he said. “We can knock out all of Westport Meadows with this one project.”

The five-year street plan calls for the city to reconstruct three roads at a cost of \$800,000 in 2014, including Holden Street from Orchard to Jackson streets, Jackson Street from Holden to Webster streets and Van Buren Street from Holden to Wisconsin Street.

In 2015, the plan is to reconstruction Larabee Street, Crocker Street and Lincoln Street from Summit Drive to Spring Street.

Milwaukee Street would be rebuilt from Jackson to Walters streets and Harrison Street would be reconstructed from Van Buren to Walters street in 2016 for \$900,000, according to the plan.

In 2017, the plan calls for spending \$1.3 million to reconstruct Milwaukee Street from Grand Avenue to Sauk Creek; Antoine Drive from Lakeview to Husting Street; Keeney Avenue from Oakland Avenue to its end; Montgomery Street from Walters to Dodge street; Norport Drive from Frances to Holden; Whitefish Road from Hales Trail to Lakeview Street; Oakland Avenue from North Spring to Park Street; and Prospect Street from Wisconsin Street to its end.

The board also agreed to apply for a \$10,000 forestry grant to help plant parkway trees next year.

While the city will undoubtedly receive the local road improvement grant, “the likelihood of our getting this (forestry) grant is not that great,” Vanden Noven told the board.

But because the application will tie the planting of these trees to the city’s emerald ash borer preparedness plan, a priority for the grant, he said there is a chance the city will receive it.

The city currently budgets \$5,000 to buy about 100 bare-root trees each year, placing these in areas where there are gaps in the plantings, Vanden Noven said.

This money, plus the cost of planting the trees, would be the match for the grant, if it’s received, he said.

“We’re trying to fill all the gaps we have in our street trees so when the emerald ash borer arrives and we have to cut down all these (ash) trees, it won’t be bare,” Vanden Noven said. “Obviously, we’re hoping it comes later rather than sooner so we don’t have as many gaps.”