

Council Comments.....

The Horseshoe Bay City Council met today in a streets workshop. If you are a fan of improving the streets of Horseshoe Bay, you will be pleased with the results. After much hard work by Councilman Phil and our engineers Tony and Pauline, a preliminary plan was discussed at length, revised where necessary and will be presented to the community for discussion over the next 60 days! The February council meeting is the target for a vote by the council to initiate the Plan.

Since you will see much written in the Beacon and on the city website about the plan, I will be brief and to the point in my comments.

Determination of the 56 miles of streets already improved or to be improved was based on housing density and street usage (streets the folks use most to get from where they are to where they're going) and includes arbitrary tweaking that takes practicality, efficiency, cost, etc. into consideration. Of the 2588 homes on streets owned by the City, improved streets will service 2499 of those homes (97%). This includes streets in HSB Proper, HSB South and HSB West. Maps and lists of streets improved or to be improved are available at City Hall or the City's website.

The standards for improvements will be those approved by the council earlier this year. Anterior streets 24 feet wide with 2 inches of HMAC (asphalt) and residential streets 22 feet wide with 1.5 HMAC (still asphalt). All will have 18 inch ribbon curbs.

The cost of the improvement project will be \$15,000,000, to be funded by \$4.5 million from the city coffers, \$1 million by the HSB Resort and the balance to be funded by \$9.5 million in Certificates of Obligation. The maximum tax rate necessary to meet the current city budget and support this funding will be \$.26. That is one penny more than the current tax rate of \$.25. The additional one penny will not be necessary if the Bay returns to a nominal growth rate in home building.

It will require 5-6 years to complete this project and may begin as early as the fourth quarter of this year. The plan is based on where houses and traffic usage are today and will change as those elements change over the life of the project. Streets not improved will be maintained by our current chip seal and pot hole repair program.

Folks – Today, much discussion, pro and con, was held on all aspects of this plan. Concessions were made. Proponents (including yours truly) of a blended assessment/ad valorem funding were convinced to go in a different direction. Since 9 – 12 months of discussion were held on this topic in 2009 – 2010, much of the ground work had been laid.

This is a good plan. I believe it encompasses the “most bang for the buck” – In the long run, maintenance costs will be reduced. Property values will be enhanced. Our community will be more attractive and out-of-pocket costs to our residents will be minimized. So – let the discussion begin. The Holiday Cocktail Circuit is upon us. Ask questions, get answers. That’s what we’re here for.

Have a grand chilly evening.

Your Scribe -
Jeff Robinson