



## Committee discussing street projects again

BY ADAM WALLWORTH Northwest Arkansas Times

Posted on Friday, March 3, 2006

URL: <http://www.nwanews.com/nwat/News/38054/>

The latest version of the proposed Transportation Improvement Program includes \$23.35 million for improvements to U.S. 71B and carries a \$162 million price tag.

Put on hold last year after aldermen were informed of the cost overruns and delays in the Wastewater System Improvement Program, the proposed transportation bond issue was once again before the Fayetteville Street Committee on Thursday night.

The committee expects to meet again in two weeks or less to find out whether the city's bond counsel believes taxpayers can afford the first phase of the program, which is now \$32 million. When the group agreed on the first phase of projects last August, the first phase was put at \$28 million, which the bond counsel said was possible, after recommending about \$25 million.

Ward 4 Alderman Lioneld Jordan, committee chairman, hopes the City Council can set a date by the end of April for an election on a 1 cent sales tax to pay for the program, which will occur in four phases over the next 12 to 15 years.

If aldermen and Mayor Dan Coody can convince voters to approve extending the 3/4 cent sales tax dedicated to repaying up to \$125 million in debt from the sewer project and adding a 1/4 cent sales tax, the city would be able to begin the first of the 26 projects, which includes the beautification of College Avenue, widening of Ruppel Road and completion of Scull Creek Trail.

City Engineer Ron Petrie presented the committee with an updated list of projects Thursday that was adjusted to reflect changes in prices; the addition of 12 million in expenses for College Avenue; adjustment for \$12 million in federal funds; replacing the North College/Fulbright flyover with \$11.25 million in improvements to the Mall/CMN Business Park area; and expanding the trails construction to include more than Scull Creek, but reducing the funding by \$299,500. Jordan said he expects to finalize the phases at the next meeting, where the bond counsel will be in attendance. The discussion will begin with the program divided as follows: • Phase One: \$31,915,000. • Phase Two: \$43,223,000. • Phase Three: \$38,502,000. • Phase Four: \$28,350,000. In addition to resurrecting the transportation bond

program, the committee discussed methodology and intent of the proposed impact fees for roads. Jim Duncan, of Duncan Associates, the firm that prepared the fee study, joined the discussion via telephone. Local developers also attended.

The group discussed how the fees would work and whether developers would get credit for building road sections.

Coody asked about the possibility of grants for businesses that want to locate in the city, which Duncan said was done elsewhere.

Duncan also said the fees were commonly used as a tool for controlling where growth occurs. However, if the city chooses to make some areas exempt from impact fees, the money generated by them could not be used in that location.

Local developer Charlie Sloan expressed his frustration over the how the fees have seemingly transformed from a way of making sure all developers are paying for building roads to a situation where some developers, or in the end the home buyer, would pay twice for the improvements.

Copyright © 2001-2006 Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Inc. All rights reserved.

Contact: [webmaster@nwanews.com](mailto:webmaster@nwanews.com)