

## STAFF REPORT

**Case No.:** N/A

**Request:** Presentation and discussion of costs for intersection enhancements for the Valley View Lane and Valwood Parkway at IH-35E intersections.

**Meeting Date:** August 23, 2021

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### BACKGROUND:

Phase two of the IH-35E widening is nearing the construction phase with construction commencing during 2022, as demolition of private property improvements within TxDOT right-of-way has already begun. TxDOT has conditionally awarded the design build contract and is expected to finalize the contract in September 2021. The construction phase is anticipated to occur over a four year period (ending in 2026). As part of the phase two highway widening, the Valley View Lane and Valwood Parkway at IH-35E intersections will both be rebuilt providing an opportunity to enhance both intersections and create gateways into Farmers Branch. For intersection enhancements to be implemented, City Council will need to approve TxDOT's advanced funding agreement and staff will subsequently transfer required funds to TxDOT following approval of the agreement. Currently, \$2.5M has been approved by City Council for intersection enhancements within the approved FY20-21 capital improvements budget.

The purpose of this agenda item is for the task force to formulate recommendations related to costs and enhancements for City Council to consider at their September 21, 2021 meeting, since they will be considering the advanced funding agreement at that meeting. The following direction is requested from the task force:

1. Does the task force want to move forward with the original direction provided by City Council to have the Valley View Lane at IH-35E intersection be the focus of enhancements and develop Valwood Parkway with lesser but complimentary enhancements at an approximate total cost of \$1.59M. This would result an approximate savings of \$650,000 which could be put towards phase 2 enhancements at Valley View Lane (which include bridge bent wraps and additional lighting, and landscaping improvements); or
2. Does the task force support a more comparable level of improvements at the Valwood Parkway at IH-35E intersection, and recommend the inclusion of the pedestrian safety wall and/or hardscape enhancements at Valwood Parkway given that costs came in under the \$2.5M originally budgeted. If both additional enhancements are pursued for Valwood Parkway, then the total cost for both the Valwood Parkway and Valley View Lane intersections would be \$2,340,931. It should be noted that this total amount is \$25,000 more than the July 1, 2020 TxDOT Opinion of Probable Construction Cost (OPCC) originally estimated, but does include hardscape enhancements and a pedestrian safety wall at Valwood Parkway, and decorative lighting standards at both the Valwood Parkway and Valley View Lane intersections.

## COSTS AND ENHANCEMENTS:

On July 14, 2020, City Council approved \$2.5M for enhancements primarily concentrated at the Valley View Lane at IH-35E intersection as it is the main gateway to the Farmers Branch Station Area/Downtown making it the focal point for the City. The Valwood Parkway at IH-35E intersection was identified as a lesser priority due to competing budgetary interests, thus the provision of conduit and lighting service was identified as an enhancement at this intersection to improve the pedestrian environment. Both intersections will benefit from a modified design which is intended to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety, and matching abutment wall graphics to improve aesthetics – both at no cost to the City.

On August 12, 2021, TxDOT provided the actual cost of enhancements to the City amounting to a total of \$2.34M which is lower than the \$2.5M approved by City Council and included additional items such as: lighting standards at both intersections; and additional enhancements at the Valwood Parkway at IH-35E intersection (hardscape elements and a pedestrian safety wall). Staff requested TxDOT provide costs for hardscape elements and the pedestrian safety wall at the Valwood Parkway intersection. The rationale for inclusion of these additional items being that TxDOT informed staff that once costing was completed by the design build contractor and delivered to the City, adding enhancements to the intersections may be difficult and at a higher cost than if they were included in the original RFP, whereas removing enhancements is less problematic. A high-level breakdown of the costs is provided below:

- Valley View Lane at IH-35E, total cost of enhancements is \$1.042M and includes:
  - Hardscape enhancements (Integral colored concrete with leaf stamped pattern, brick stamped colored concrete bands, brick stamped colored concrete enhanced crosswalks)
  - Pedestrian safety wall (adjacent to the U-turn lane)
  - Pedestrian lighting (conduit, service and lighting standards)
- Valwood Parkway at IH-35E, total cost of enhancements is \$987,000 and includes:
  - Hardscape enhancements
  - Pedestrian safety wall (adjacent to the U-turn lane)
  - Pedestrian lighting (conduit, service, and lighting standards)
- Professional Services, total cost is \$312,000 and includes:
  - Design services
  - Professional services quality assurance
  - Independent quality (construction)

The table below shows a comparison of cost between the July 1, 2020 OPCC provided by TxDOT which was the basis of City Council's July 14, 2021 allocation of \$2.5M, and the actual costs received from TxDOT's conditionally awarded design contractor:



As stated earlier in this report, the purpose of this agenda item is for the task force to formulate recommendations related to costs and enhancements for City Council to consider at their September 21, 2021 meeting. Therefore, the following direction is requested from the task force:

1. Does the task force want to move forward with the original direction provided by Council to have the Valley View Lane at IH-35E intersection be the focus of enhancements and develop Valwood parkway with lesser but complimentary enhancements at an approximate total cost of \$1.59M. This would leave an approximate savings of \$650,000 which could be put towards phase 2 enhancements at Valley View Lane (which include bridge bent wraps and additional lighting, and landscaping improvements); or
2. Does the task force support a more comparable level of improvements at the Valwood Parkway at IH-35E intersection, and recommend the inclusion of the pedestrian safety wall and/or hardscape enhancements at Valwood Parkway given that costs came in under the \$2.5M originally budgeted. If both additional enhancements are pursued for Valwood Parkway, then the total cost for both the Valwood Parkway and Valley View Lane intersections would be \$2,340,931, which is \$25,000 more than the July 1, 2020 TxDOT OPCC originally estimated, but does include hardscape enhancements and a pedestrian safety wall at Valwood Parkway, and decorative lighting standards at both the Valwood Parkway and Valley View Lane intersections.

#### NEXT STEPS:

Once direction is received from the task force it will be brought forward to City Council on September 21, 2021 where City Council will consider the recommendation of the task force and the advanced funding agreement with TxDOT. If approval of the advanced funding agreement is given, then funds for the enhancements will be transferred to TxDOT within 30 days.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends following the original direction provided by City Council on July 14, 2020 and moving forward with the enhancements at the Valley View Lane and IH-35E intersection as outlined in item 1 above, and the lighting (i.e. conduit, service and lighting standards) at the Valwood Parkway and IH-35E intersection for a total approximate cost of \$1.59M. Should the task force wish to create a more comparable level of enhancements at the Valley View Lane and Valwood Parkway at IH-35E intersections, then staff recommends that the pedestrian safety wall be added for Valwood Parkway as it will contribute to the safety and functionality of the intersection for pedestrians and cyclists, with less importance being placed on the hardscape enhancements, for a total approximate cost of \$1.7M.

#### ACTION:

Provide a recommendation to City Council related to intersection betterments enhancements and corresponding funding for the Valwood Parkway and Valley View Lane at IH-35E intersections.