



***Planning Commission
and HPC Memorandum***

To: Planning Commission and Heritage Preservation Commission
From: John Hinzman, Community Development Director
Date: March 13, 2017
Item: Review of Public Works Project 2017-1 – Neighborhood Infrastructure Improvements

COMMISSION ACTION REQUESTED:

Review Public Works Project 2017-1 – Neighborhood Infrastructure Improvements. The project area is generally bounded by 6th Street, Vermillion Street, Highway 55 and Pine Street. Public Works staff will present further information on the improvements at the meeting.

BACKGROUND

The 2017 Neighborhood Infrastructure Improvements Project would involve complete reconstruction of streets and substantial reconstruction of underground utilities. Primary elements of the street reconstruction will be replacement of the pavement and installation of new concrete curb and gutter. Also included is sidewalk replacement where it currently exists on 6th Street, sidewalk replacement and extension on the west side of Ashland Street from 6th Street to Highway 55, sanitary sewer main lining, replacement of the water main, replacement of sanitary sewer and water services, and storm sewer extensions, repairs and replacements to provide proper and adequate stormwater drainage to the neighborhood. All streets would remain at their existing width or narrower than they presently exist. The end visual result will be commensurate with what was provided in the neighborhood just to the east when the City reconstructed that infrastructure in 2008.

Due to the size of the project, it was necessary to phase its construction over two years. The streets selected for 2017 were based on the need to construct the utilities in a way to maintain grade from the low end to the high end. A map of the project has been attached for reference. The streets to be reconstructed in 2017 include 6th Street from Maple Street to Spring Street, Ashland Street from 6th Street to Highway 55, Forest Street from 6th Street to 7th Street, and the alleys between 6th Street and 7th Street as follows:

- Alley west of Forest Street;
- Alley from Forest Street to Ashland Street
- Alley from Spring Street to Eddy Street

PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW

Authority of Review

City Code Chapter 30.05, Subd. E outlines the duties of the Planning Commission including “Review of the Comprehensive Plan for development... of the City including street arrangements and improvements and public utility services”. The Comprehensive Plan is available on the City’s website at <http://www.hastingsmn.gov/city-government/city-departments/planning-zoning/planning-documents/comprehensive-plan>.

Existing Condition

The proposed project is located within existing residential neighborhoods and designated for Low Density Residential on the Comprehensive Plan. Most properties are zoned R-2 Medium Density Residential and are within the Original Hastings Design Standards Zoning Overlay District. A portion of the project area is within the Old Hastings Historic District with most homes constructed prior to 1950.

Comprehensive Plan Review

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan provides the following guidance for the proposed project area:

- Land Use Plan (Chapter 2)
 - Land Use Goal No. 1 - Protect the look and feel of older neighborhoods.
 - Land Use Goal No. 3 – Keep older neighborhoods attractive and vital through improved streets.
 - Land Use Objective No. 2 – Sustainable Growth – Create a stronger sense of neighborhood and community. Keep existing neighborhoods attractive and economically vital by providing high-quality streets, parks, street trees and other public services.
 - Land Use Objective No. 5 – Residential Neighborhoods – Continue to improve streets, sidewalks, parks and other public facilities in established areas in order to promote private reinvestment, housing and business rehabilitation. Continue to apply the Original Hastings Design Standards.
 - Land Use Objective No. 12 – Local and Regional Investments. Invest in public facilities so as to maximize their impact. Refer to Comprehensive Plan when updating capital plans.
- Transportation Plan (Chapter 3)
 - Transportation Goal No. 1 – Safe and Efficient Highways and Roadways. Strive to design road projects to minimize adverse effects on nearby neighborhoods.
- Community Design (Chapter 4)

- Community Design Objective No. 1 – Overall Urban Character. Protect the quiet, leafy and familial character of most residential neighborhoods. Balance the needs of automobile access with pedestrian scale architecture and accessibility.
- Community Design Objective No. 4 – Established Neighborhoods. Maintain the traditional urban character of these neighborhoods and promote continues public and private reinvestment to ensure that they remain attractive places to live.

Analysis

Infrastructure reinvestment within the project area will improve neighborhood vitality and promote private reinvestment. Existing sidewalks and alleyways will be reconstructed consistent with the established neighborhood character.

HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION REVIEW

The Hastings Design Guidelines applies to individually designated properties, historic districts, and any adjacent City infrastructure improvements. The latter are reviewed by the HPC as an advisory commission rather than as a final decision.

Below are some of the Design Guidelines that apply to the proposed project that are listed on page 32 – Residential Guideline 12: Public Landscape and Streetscape:

- Street Width- Stay with the current width (generally about 30') (In line with Guidelines Pg. 32)

A policy of the City has been to widen narrow streets at the time of reconstruction to a minimum of 32 feet when possible. The Residential Guidelines state that streets should not be widened.

- Trees- Save all possible and replant ones that are removed, in safe locations (In line with Guidelines Pg. 32)

- Sidewalks- All sidewalks will be removed and reconstructed at 5 feet wide
The current width of sidewalks in the area ranges from 4 feet to 5 feet in width.

(Guidelines Pg. 32:

2. ~ Planting strips and sidewalks should be preserved and maintained at maximum width.)

- Retaining walls- Where some small walls are required, they will be similar to what was approved by the Hastings HPC in 2008 for the adjacent infrastructure reconstruction project. (In line with Guidelines Pg. 32)

- Streetlights- Streetlights are not being affected except for the slight adjustment of some poles at intersections during reconstruction. These poles are made of wood and owned by Xcel Energy (The Guidelines do not comment on streetlights and new ones are not being proposed)



ATTACHMENTS

- Location Map
- Preservation Site Map
- HPC Design Guideline 12: Public Landscape and Streetscape

LOCATION MAP

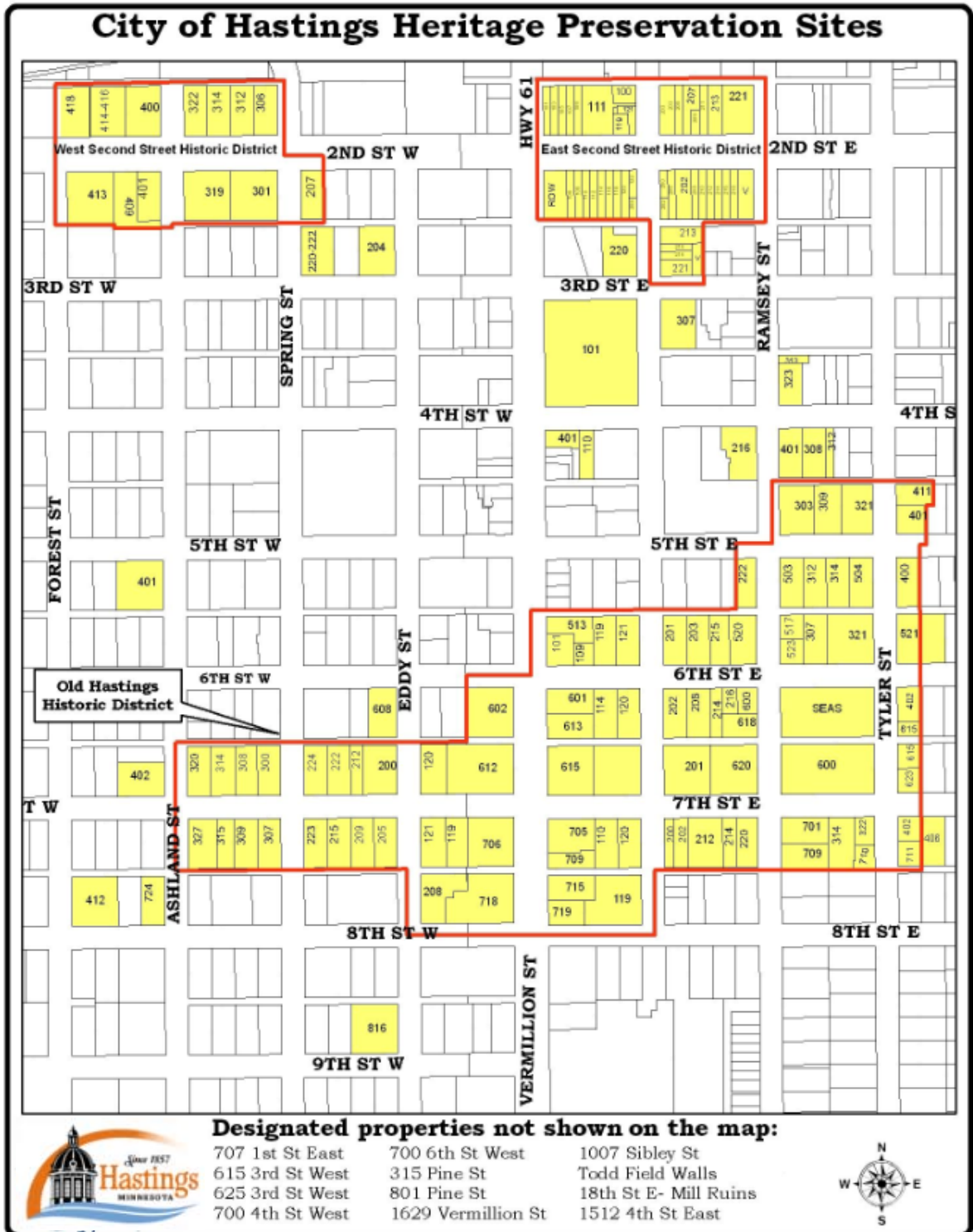


Proposed City Project 2017-1
2017 Neighborhood Infrastructure Improvements
Updated 1.24.2017

-  Street/Alley Reconstruction
-  Street/Alley/Utility Reconstruction (Phase 2 - Proposed for 2018)



HPC Designated Property Map





One important feature of Hastings' historic districts and neighborhoods is the original layout of grid-plan streets, alleys, and sidewalks and the regular division of blocks and lots. The resulting network of spaces is a part of the city's historic character. The maintenance and repair of streets, sidewalks, planting strips, retaining walls, and fencing requires public engineering standards that are sensitive to the scale and appearance of historic areas.

Design Guidelines

1. The maintenance and design of existing or new streets in or adjacent to historic districts should respect the original plan of interconnected streets, sidewalks, and alleys. Streets should not be widened to accommodate through traffic and alleys should not be vacated. Cul-de-sac and dead-end streets should not be created in existing grid-plan areas.
2. Preserve the mature neighborhood tree canopy wherever possible, and replant with regularly-spaced trees where necessary. Planting strips and sidewalks should be preserved and maintained at maximum width.
3. Retaining walls should be compatible with traditional walls in Hastings, which were primarily limestone, brick, and poured concrete. While split-face (rock-face) concrete block is appropriate for the construction of new retaining walls, block with a round, striated, or polygonal profile should be avoided.
4. Iron or steel fencing should have appropriately scaled and detailed masonry or steel piers.
5. Surface parking lots should be screened with landscaping, low masonry walls, or iron or steel fencing of appropriate design.



A new fence edges W. Second Street, 2002.