



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
L A C R O S S E

TO: La Crosse Common Council Members & City Plan Commission Members
CC: La Crosse Department Heads & Managers
FROM: Mayor Tim Kabat *Tim Kabat*
DATE: June 22, 2020
RE: 2021-2025 Capital improvement plan budget

The proposed 2021-2025 City of La Crosse capital improvement budget includes \$119,209,318 in total spending for 2021, with \$14,708,380 of that total coming from new general fund borrowing. Per our Finance Department, this amount of borrowing can be managed to limit any substantial increase to the City's property tax levy, thereby minimizing impacts to taxpayers.

Significant funds are leveraged from La Crosse utilities, tax increment financing (TIF) and Redevelopment Authority borrowing. This plan addresses major needed upgrades to the City's infrastructure, buildings and waste water treatment plant.

Key categories funded in the proposed plan for infrastructure (streets, bridges) total \$13,471,038 (not including State funds for Jackson Street/State Road 33), economic and community development (with \$19.1 million for Riverpoint District infrastructure) total \$21,966,930, parks and public buildings including the airport and public safety for \$11,927,000, capital equipment for various departments total \$4,195,350, and utilities for \$67,649,000.

Highlights of the proposed 2021 plan include \$1,750,000 in new borrowing to renovate the first floor of City Hall and the Common Council Chambers to address asbestos remediation, new public seating, and physical changes to improve customer service and protect staff and the public from COVID-19. \$500,000 in new borrowing is planned for the first phase of a two-year renovation to the South Community Library. Another \$500,000 in borrowing is proposed for the first part of a two-year restoration of the Fish Hatchery building in Riverside Park. The City has a number of buildings that require on-going repairs and maintenance and these funds address critical needs.

Riverfront and levee improvements include a phased expansion of the levee at Riverside Park for \$2 million, sourced from \$1.8 million in TIF funds and \$200,000 in new borrowing. Work on the northside levees is proposed for \$500,000 in new borrowing. Repairs to Pammel Creek are proposed for \$200,000, split between new borrowing and storm water funds. The La Crosse River Marsh hydrological study is proposed for \$100,000 in new borrowing to address water flow, ecological restoration and flood storage. Please note, the City's floodplain relief program does not require 2021 funding, as there is more than \$350,000 currently available.

Park improvement highlights include \$300,000 in TIF funding to complete the outdoor phase of the Green Island tennis facility. \$300,000 in TIF funds is planned to complete fixes in Pettibone Park to raise the road going south out of the floodplain to the Pettibone marina area. Another \$300,000 in TIF funds is planned to re-do the parking, utilities and bathrooms at the Carroll Park ballfields. \$150,000 in new borrowing is proposed for on-going recreational trail development, repairs and maintenance.

Unfortunately, due to funding constraints, the Weigent Park shelter and Bluffview Park accessory items are pushed to 2022. These projects could get moved up if private fundraising were organized, such as that completed recently for Springbrook Park and Veteran's Memorial Pool.

Significant economic and community development projects include \$19.1 million planned for Riverpoint District infrastructure (streets, storm water, utilities, sidewalks, lighting). This program to be funded by Redevelopment Authority borrowing, with new TIF increment to pay off the debt. \$1.05 million in TIF funding is proposed for new and renovated housing in the Washburn, Powell-Poage-Hamilton and Northside neighborhoods. Please note, the Downtown façade improvement program does not require 2021 funding, as there are more than \$110,000 in available funds.

Public safety investments include \$1 million in new borrowing to acquire property and to begin plans for a new law enforcement center and fire station to be located in the block bound by Ferry Street, Fourth Street, Market Street and Fifth Avenue. There is currently more than \$5 million in existing funds available for construction of a new Fire Station Four on the City's northside. Current efforts include updates and repairs to Station One and to develop plans and specifications for the renovation and expansion of Station Three. Another \$316,000 in new borrowing is proposed to replace the fire stations antiquated alert system. No new borrowing for fire station construction is proposed for 2021 until existing funds are spent down.

For 2021, five point five (5.5) miles of streets are proposed for fixes and repaving. The amount is consistent with our efforts from the past several years. Significant projects in 2021 include Jackson Street/State Road 33 from 3rd to 23rd Streets (WisDOT project), Airport Road from Lakeshore to the terminal, Gillette Street from Caledonia to George, Main Street from West Avenue to 17th, and phase one of the Bliss Road stabilization project. Repairs are also planned to the Copeland Avenue and Lang Drive bridges over the La Crosse River.

Please note, the various neighborhood lighting projects are pushed out until 2022 to allow time to address our lighting standards. Concerns were raised by several Council Members regarding the Cass Street neighborhood lighting project. As there is no agreement between the neighborhood groups, Common Council members and Engineering staff, an independent lighting reviewed is proposed.

The City's most significant project for 2021 is the start of major planned updates and renovations totaling \$62 million for the City's waste water treatment plant. Also planned are upgrades to various sanitary and storm sewer lift stations at Causeway Boulevard, Taylor Street, Rose Street and Monitor Street. The Myrick Park water pumping station is also planned for a multi-year improvement program. These projects are funded with State and utility funds.

Significant projects at the La Crosse Regional Airport include completion of a stormwater drainage study and the first phase of implementation totaling \$675,000, and terminal improvements including a new generator and baggage conveyor totaling \$980,000. These projects are funded with State funds, passenger facility charges and airport operating funds.

The proposed plan as presented is recommended for approval by the City Plan Commission. Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information. Thank you.