

Speaker 1 ([00:05:37](#)):

We are ready.

Speaker 2 ([00:05:41](#)):

Welcome everyone to the January 7th City Commission meeting. Commissioner Sellers and Mayor Devereux are online and so I'll be running the meeting tonight and before we begin, we'll have the city clerk give us some instructions.

Speaker 1 ([00:05:58](#)):

Good evening everyone. Please silence your cell phones to minimize distractions. During the meeting when the Vice Mayor calls for public comment, please approach the podium to indicate you wish to speak. Virtual participants should use the raise hand function to indicate they wish to speak. When prompted, please select join as panelists. There will be a brief delay as your role changes. Once your name is called, please unmute and turn on your camera. To provide your comments, please state your name and zip code. Before speaking, the city reserves the right to turn videos off or mute participants. All comments will be limited to three minutes. The primary format for accessing or participating in this meeting is in person at City Hall. Virtual access to view or participate in the meeting cannot be guaranteed. The chat function will not be monitored. If you have any trouble, the meeting can be viewed on the city's YouTube channel and cable channel 25. Thank you Vice Mayor.

Speaker 2 ([00:06:59](#)):

Thank you Sherry. The first agenda item is to approve the agenda. The city commission reserves the right to amend, supplement, or reorder the agenda. During the meeting, move to approve the agenda.

Speaker 3 ([00:07:10](#)):

Second

Speaker 2 ([00:07:11](#)):

Is first and second to approve the agenda. All those in favor, please say aye. Aye.

Speaker 4 ([00:07:16](#)):

Aye. Aye.

Speaker 2 ([00:07:18](#)):

Passes 5 2 0. Item B is the consent agenda. Items on the consent agenda are considered under one motion and approved by one motion. Members of the governing body may remove items for separate discussion. If desired, members of the public may remove items identified as quasi-judicial for separate discussion. If desired, members of the public will be limited to three minutes for comments. First, does any commissioner have an item they'd like to remove?

Speaker 5 ([00:07:48](#)):

No vice mayor.

Speaker 2 ([00:07:49](#)):

Okay. Scene none. There is one. Quasi-judicial item B seven A. Any member of the public like to remove that item from the consent agenda? Doesn't look like anyone in person. Anyone online? Sherry?

Speaker 1 ([00:08:04](#)):

No.

Speaker 2 ([00:08:05](#)):

No. Okay. I look for a motion on the consent agenda. Go ahead

Speaker 5 ([00:08:11](#)):

To approve the consent as presented.

Speaker 2 ([00:08:15](#)):

Second. So first and second to approve the consent agenda. All those in favor say aye. Aye. Aye.

Speaker 5 ([00:08:20](#)):

Aye.

Speaker 6 ([00:08:21](#)):

Aye.

Speaker 2 ([00:08:22](#)):

Consent agenda is approved. That brings us to the regular agenda and the first item on the regular agenda is to consider revised development plan related to 5 5 5 5 West sixth Street.

Speaker 7 ([00:08:41](#)):

Good evening commissioners. As a quick note, Randy wanted me to remind you if you had any parte communications for this project to voice them now.

Speaker 2 ([00:08:51](#)):

Okay. Thank you for the reminder both Drew and Randy Lawson. I have none.

Speaker 3 ([00:09:01](#)):

I have none other than the emails that we've all received.

Speaker 2 ([00:09:05](#)):

Commissioner Os

Speaker 5 ([00:09:09](#)):

Vice Mayor. No, I've had none other than the emails as stated

Speaker 2 ([00:09:14](#)):

And Mayor Devo,

Speaker 4 ([00:09:17](#)):

Vice Mayor Finkel, I have had no separate discussions with anyone outside the email chains.

Speaker 2 ([00:09:23](#)):

Okay. And the same for myself.

Speaker 7 ([00:09:26](#)):

Okay, thank

Speaker 2 ([00:09:27](#)):

You.

Speaker 7 ([00:09:27](#)):

So as mentioned, this is an amendment to the approved final development plan that is on file for 55 55 West sixth Street for the Alva Dora Apartments. This is to remove the access gate on the southern access point of the site. You may remember this as the commission heard this previously in April of 2024. This is coming back now because the applicant and the residents were not aware that the item would be so controversial and so that was one of the reasons why they didn't show up and today they are proposing some compromises slash alternatives for the commission to consider the code. Just some information on why you're seeing this. Again, the code does allow successive applications like this because the amendment process to final development plans are usually administrative. However, when staff deems that there are significant changes from that approved final development plan, it elevates it to the city commission. So essentially this would be usually an administrative process, but since this is a significant change, removing the gate, we are pushing it forward to the city commission.

([00:10:37](#)):

I just wanted to note that the applicant does pay for each submittal, so every submittal that they will be going before you, if they wanted to continue doing this, they will have to pay the submittal fees. Staff met with the applicant prior to this submission basically to go over some of the Compromise plans and alternatives just because we let them know that essentially just reapplying and having you guys consider that again would be, it wouldn't go the same. It would go the same way as before. So we worked with both code enforcement and planning staff as well as emergency services to kind of brainstorm some compromises. I'll leave that to the applicant to discuss and share with you guys. And just as a reminder, the city staff does not have any reason to require the gate or have it removed. We are pretty neutral in this fact.

([00:11:25](#)):

Basically the site is required to have two access points due to fire and emergency services and so that is why they have that Southern access point and as this was processed back when it was originally proposed, the commission and the neighbors came to the compromise that the Southern access would be gated for emergency access only. And fire and emergency services has stated that they have no opinions one way or the other because they will have access no matter what either with clickers or a padlock. And so essentially the options for this evening are to approve the removal of the gate in its entirety. You can deny the removal of the gate and this project or you can approve an alternative or compromise and a note will be added to that final development plan and planning staff and the applicant will work to get that established. So that kind of wraps up staff's perspective. Again, I'm happy to answer any questions you have for the staff's point of view. I know we have an MSO member online and with that I will let the applicant have any information pass along to you.

Speaker 2 ([00:12:37](#)):

Thank you. First. Anyone have questions for Drew on this at this point?

Speaker 4 ([00:12:43](#)):

No sir.

Speaker 2 ([00:12:44](#)):

Okay. Okay. And applicant present. Thank

Speaker 8 ([00:12:51](#)):

You. Terry Leal, my zip code 6 6 0 4 9 on behalf of the applicant. I am expecting the property manager. She's on her way but having problems with the streets I guess or parking her wherever, but she is on her way so she would have some additional comments. Yeah, I understand. As Mr. Bilby had mentioned, Drew mentioned that this is the second timer before the city commission. I wanted to give an explanation behind that because I know I watched the YouTube videos from the videos of the commission meeting and I think there was some criticism for them not being here that I believe what I understand is it was a miscommunication since the staff had approved the approval of the removal of the gate. They had understood they didn't need to be here so they weren't, and I know that the commission and a lot of the people who were objecting to it were very critical of them not being here, that they didn't care enough about the application to be here. They were told they didn't need to be. It had been approved. They thought they didn't know it was going to be controversial of course, so they didn't show up. So I would encourage the commission not to hold that against them. They certainly do care about the application. Once it was denied, they contacted me about what they could do about it.

([00:14:11](#)):

They feel very strongly that there are some really good reasons as to why they are asking for the gate to be removed. None of that was heard by the commission and they wanted their opportunity to have the commission hear their side of the story. So I would ask the commission to have an open mind. I know this is back in front of you within the last seven or eight months, as Drew had mentioned, there's nothing in the code that prohibits reapplication and so that's why we're here. I understand that this was done back in 2007, the original final development plan and that there was an agreement with the city and the developer and maybe some of the owners that are even here tonight about having that gate to limit traffic on Stone Creek. I think one of the reasons why we're here is Alva Dora, that the current owners bought it in 2022.

([00:15:06](#)):

They were not part of that agreement. We're not part of that compromise and none of the tenants who live at Alva Door were able to participate in that agreement as well. None of them live there obviously before the development. And it's really those tenants, it's them and their safety is why we're here tonight. Alva Door and the owner, they don't really care about the gate being there or not, but they're getting a lot of questions from their tenants as to why that gate's always locked or shut or why they can't use it and they don't have a good answer for that. All they can say is, well, that's the way the city required it and whether we have good reasons to remove it or not, whether we have good reasons for the city to remove it or not, we have no control over that. So that's really why we're here.

([00:15:50](#)):

It's not because the gate was not functioning and they just didn't want to fix it. I know that there was some comments at the last commission meeting, but that's why they were asking for it to be removed because they didn't want to fix it. They've probably have spent more money rehabbing Alva Dora trying to make it a nicer apartment for the residents and paying for the application and attorney's fees than what the gate would cause. That's not the issue. It's not because they don't want to fix it, it's because the tenants would like to have that access. The residents who live there would like to have that access and that's really why we're here for Alva Dora. It's also the safety of their residents.

([00:16:32](#)):

Right now we have two halves of Alva Dora. There's an east half and the west half. I think you guys are aware of that. That's the east half is really where we're Yeah, if you don't mind posting that a little larger. So the east half is basically the middle of this diagram on the left. That's who would access Stone Creek. Most of the residents are on the west half. They would access Stone Ridge through the normal access point and really what we're talking about is that East half the demographics of the tenants on that East half are mainly elderly people. I think the property manager Ron Betten court had said that the average age of the people who were living on that east half are 72 years old. I know that there was some criticism about, oh, when the gate was closed, I should back up a little bit.

(00:17:23):

The way this came up was Alva Door decided they needed to repave the access point off of Stone Ridge and so they closed that and before they did that, Ron Benton court had filed a Freedom Information Act with the city asking for documents, thinking that maybe there was some reason why the gate was shut, did not get the final development plan. She had no idea it was there even though she would have constructive notice because it was filed, there's nobody disputing that. She just wasn't aware of it. So they ended up closing access off to Stone Ridge so they could repave it and they opened up the street to Stone Creek and of course that was the only access for the tenants while they were repaving it. And so every tenant in that neighborhood started using that and I think that's what the neighbors who are objecting to this noticed is all these 150 residents are using that one access point really once that access point was fixed and repaired, Alva Door wasn't aware of the final development plan requirement until Trinity Westcott with the City Code informed them of that and that's when they filed their application to remove it.

(00:18:35):

There are some and Ron Ab Betten court would have that and had stories about elderly people who had doctor's appointments that couldn't get out. I think with the weather that we noticed a couple days ago, the access point onto Stone Creek, I'm sorry, on Stone Ridge is now very difficult and the street Stone Ridge is very icy and it goes uphill to sixth Street and very hard to get up there. So they think it would be better safety wise when we have inclement weather to drive on the south side through Stone Creek and that's really what they're asking for. The diagram on the right shows the red line there is the owner of that one apartment or owner. The tenant has to traverse through the parking lot to get to the access driving through these narrow passageways on the parking lot, which are very narrow to get out of the apartment complex.

(00:19:38):

Whereas if this person is able to use the axis onto Stone Creek could drive a short way turn left to get out of the complex. And I know the owners that are here to object are going to cite to the fact that they are concerned about the safety of their children and everybody here, I don't think there's anybody here that would disagree that safety of children is an important thing for the city Commission to consider. What I would state is that there are 150 residents of Alva Door who also are concerned about safety and there are children, families with children that live there mostly on the west side that now have to compete with the 52. Some owners on the east side driving through these parking lot to get access to Public Street, which they would not have to do if this gate was removed.

(00:20:29):

So I think one of the concerns for Alva Dora is simply eliminating that congestion and the safety factors for them. In addition, the elderly residents, if they have family and they want to access that, they have to drive around obviously to the west side and sometimes in emergency seconds count the fire department, we met with them, they have no position. They said they can use a electronic gate or one that's locked with a padlock. They don't really care. But I would argue a gate that's locked with a padlock takes time to open before a firetruck get in there. Now maybe it's minutes but sometimes minutes count.

(00:21:14):

So we think from a safety perspective to the residents on the east side, that ought to be opened up the, as Drew said in his report with the agenda items, this was agreed to back in 2007 because Branchwood was not open at that point and it was a compromise settlement between the developer and these owners or a few of the owners in the city. There are lots of change since then. I mean it's been 18 years since that agreement was reached. Branchwood is now open if that gate to Stone Creek is open, the majority, I would argue the majority of the traffic is going to go to the East to Branchwood and passes only four houses along that route. Most of the traffic that goes, if you're going to go right to go down Stone Creek, you're in a maze of neighborhoods, not really any good ways out.

(00:22:13):

So I think the amount of traffic on that would be pretty minimal and I think the traffic study didn't show anything of any concern. Again, the safety is the most important thing to Alva door, not that they're trying to fly out the rules or try to do something to get away with anything. I think one of the submittals, and I haven't seen the emails to the city commission members from the owners, but I know last time they had submitted letters and somebody objected that well the opinions of temporary tenants should not influence the city over those of long-term residents. And I think that's just the wrong way to look at this. I mean the tenants in this apartment complex are residents of the city of Lawrence as well. They have equal rights to use as public streets as any other owners and the consideration for the tenants shouldn't be less than the owners.

(00:23:17):

Yeah, I understand the owners, some of the owners bought expecting that that gate would stay there, but there is an amendment procedure for final development plans. Things change and I know that oftentimes owners who are subject to change object because they want to keep it the way it is. But I think the paramount concern is safety because the city now requires two access points for developments such as Alva Door. If it was new, there was a safety consideration. The city had decided to require these two access points and we think that that same safety consideration's the same for albedo.

(00:24:00):

I think if there's a mechanical gate, which was what was there before, those things are subject to failure, especially in inclement weather with things, freezing ice and those kind of things. And again, if that gate is closed and is inoperable, all of a sudden the fire department now has to go over to the west side and we think that that's an issue as well. Furthermore, and I think this is how this all started is the west side can also be blocked. I mean if the gate is there, owners need to get out, especially the elderly residents need to go to a doctor's appointment when that gate is closed for whatever reason, they have no access to get out. That's not an emergency. They don't have any access to get through that gate. For example, when Alva Door needed to fix the drive to that access, they had to close that temporarily and without the gate being open, the residents are stuck there without any way to get out.

(00:24:55):

Now obviously you say, you might say, well, if they do some repair, they can open the gate and that might be one compromise. But I guess what we would also ask is, look, there could be weather that blocks it, there could be a traffic accident that blocks it. There could be fire trucks that block that exit. There's any number of reasons why that west side could be blocked and not allowing the residents to get out or in. There are several tenants who work for hospitals that need to get out to their job and as I said, there are several elderly residents who need to be able to get out to go to doctor's appointments and we do have an example of one of the residents who could not do that. We think the impact to opening the gate is minimal. We're not talking about 150 residents using that gate unless the access is blocked for some reason we think most of it's going to be from the east half, which as I mentioned, the demographic is elderly. There's only 52 residents there if I understand, or 52 units there that, and again, most of those are going to go left on Stone Creek to get to Branchwood and not drive down that neighborhood.

(00:26:06):

I think the last meeting, the neighbors talked about a high uptick in traffic. Again when Alva Door had to shut that access to the west, that was the only access out. And so yeah, 150 residents at that point had to drive through and that probably was a significant uptick. If both access points are open, you're not going to see as much traffic. They also objected. They think traffic goes too fast down Stone Ridge. People drive faster than the speed limit. And again, there are lots of ways the city's very good at minimizing speed on traffic. So I think I'm going to talk about some options just a little bit later. One of the things that were mentioned by the owners, and I don't remember if it was at a meeting with the city at the last commission meeting or with Alva Dora that they had mentioned about, well, Alva Ddo is not part of the special improvement district for the Queen Road because they couldn't access Branchwood and that's not unfair.

(00:27:05):

Alva Door is not part of that and so therefore they shouldn't get access to Branchwood. I would argue that if the city could change that, Alva would probably be fine with that. But if not, Alva pays 174, almost \$175,000 in taxes in 2024 without any special districts, and that's more than any all of the owners on Stone Creek combined. So they do pay their fair share of taxes. So being a part of this special assessment district shouldn't be a factor in whether the city allows the state to be removed. I know that the commission was a little bit critical of Alva Dora a last meeting about repeatedly violating the city code and I talked to Trinity Westco about any other violations that Alva Dora had been subject to other than the gate and she said, no, there were no other violations and no complaints of other violations. So I'm not sure where that's coming from. Again, Alva Door has been an owner for only two years. In 2022 they bought and there hasn't been anything since then other than this gate. So I don't know where that came from. I wanted to let that be known that there were no other violations. This isn't a situation where Alor is flouting the rules over and over and over again.

(00:28:26):

Alor offered to meet with the owners, many of whom are here tonight, to try to find a compromise situation because again, we're looking at Alva Door is looking at the safety of its residents. They understand the concern of the owners with respect to the safety of their children and wanted to try to reach some kind of compromise. And basically what we left that meeting with was the owners were not willing to compromise, couldn't reach any kind of an agreement. There are options available to address many, if not most of the concerns that the neighbors have raised and those options are, look, we could somehow make it illegal to turn right onto Stone Creek left hand turn only so that they're driving over to Branchwood and not down Stone Creek. I know that the MSO said that that's really not a viable option if the neighbors are concerned about speeding down that street.

(00:29:25):

I know the city's good about installing traffic humps to slow that down. That's a possibility. The other option that we thought of is maybe making the entrance or exit from Stone Creek onto Stone Ridge make that exit only. No driving into it from Stone Ridge. I mean similar to what Schwartz Road is off of sixth Street. I know that a few years ago that neighbors who lived on Schwartz North of sixth complained about traffic cutting through their neighborhood and the city ended up prohibiting traffic to turn into Schwartz Road off of sixth Street. You can only exit. That would be an option. Those are all options that Alva Dora is willing to do and if somebody smarter than me can come up with another idea, they're certainly willing to do that. I mean they prefer not to have the gate. Their residents prefer not to have the gate, but they aren't willing to take it or leave it. They're willing to work with the neighbors in the city to try to get something that works for everybody. Having the gate closed doesn't really work for them. If you have any questions, I'd be happy to answer 'em. Otherwise I'd introduce Ronna Benton Court who I think's here now.

Speaker 2 ([00:30:35](#)):

Okay, we have questions. Mike? Excuse me. Mayo Commissioner Sellers. Okay.

Speaker 4 ([00:30:46](#)):

No questions at this time, sir.

Speaker 2 ([00:30:48](#)):

Okay, thank you. Okay, well we can open it up for a public comment. I think they were

Speaker 3 ([00:30:58](#)):

Going to. I think he was.

Speaker 2 ([00:30:59](#)):

Oh you.

Speaker 9 ([00:31:03](#)):

Hi, my name is Rona Betencourt and I am the onsite property manager for Alva Dora. I come to you not only as the property manager for Alva Dora, but I am also a resident and I lived there prior to GBS takeover and prior to my working for the company. So I speak on behalf of a demographic of those of us over 50 as a resident of Alva Dora and also I'm speaking on behalf of the property as well. And my main concern is the safety of each and every one of the residents who I care for very deeply.

([00:31:42](#)):

Whether or not I convey this correctly, I do care, A gate or any sort of situation that impedes fire and safety access for whatever reason isn't acceptable. Everyone needs to have access to healthcare or to emergency medical services or even just to come and go in their daily lives and many things can impact that case in point. Primarily this storm, not only did we have a significant amount of ice which impacted Stone Ridge Drive as Stone Ridge, our main entrance sits on a pretty serious incline and I can certainly provide you with footage showing cars, SUVs with four wheel drive and pickups sliding down the hill. Unable to stop. There was one young gentleman that was proceeding northbound up Stone Ridge and couldn't make it up the hill and I was able to skate across the parking lot and put some ice melt down behind his tires so that he could make a U-turn and proceed back southbound down.

([00:32:44](#)):

Stoneridge as getting up the hill wasn't an option. So even if Alva Dora Stoneridge was our only entrance and exit in certain emergencies, particularly in ice proceeding out to the right and north up to Stoneridge Drive is not possible. There just isn't enough traction whether you have snow tires or snow chains or whatever. Obviously there's no bite so people have to proceed down stoneridge anyway to the next flattest area and obviously there's quite a maze to get through the rest of the neighborhood. So as you proceed down Stone Ridge or southbound, even going towards Harvard Road, it's a pretty good clip. It takes you out of your way. So with regard to the rear entrance of the property going out onto Stone Creek, the easiest point to get on the fastest route, which would be sixth Street, is to proceed out of Alva Dora turn onto Stone Creek over to Queens Boulevard and up to sixth Street.

([00:33:45](#)):

It's much safer, it's a much more direct route and it only impacts four homes that way. Again, proceeding out or to the right onto Stone Creek isn't really feasible, it's just not a viable transit area. So going through the neighborhood just simply isn't efficient. And if you're trying to get to work or a doctor's appointment, there are no doctor's offices located in that residential area, nor is hospitals. So we have one resident that

works in Topeka, so obviously getting out is not going through the neighborhood either, but it could be, it's not limited to ice and snow, it could be a tornado, a branch falling down, blocking our entrance if there happened, forbid there happened to be a power failure or a mechanical defect and there's no way to get the gate open. We all of a sudden have an issue where emergency services simply can't get to our residence.

(00:34:45):

Not only can they not exit, but essential help first responders, anything that's critical to their life, they can't be reached. And certainly with the events of our ice storm as they set in on Saturday afternoon, Stone Ridge is not necessarily passable. I had a hard time getting back in even just proceeding southbound. I picked up a few essential supplies for one of my elderly residents because I was going to the storm and getting some necessary supplies, bread, milk and that sort of thing. And I said, Hey, I'll be out so you don't have to. I'd be happy to pick these things up for you.

(00:35:26):

And getting back in, as I said, was really impossible and it would've certainly been easier to transit that back area and go through. So again, I'd like to touch back on whether there's a gate or not. We simply, in order to be compliant with the city of Lawrence codes for having two functional entrances for emergency services, we need to have something in place that protects our residents. And as far as response time, I think a gate or whatever you should decide is great, but again, if there's a mechanical failure or a power failure or something happens that that gate can't physically be opened, it limits response time for first responders. And if you look at the map that Terry had provided, it's simply the most direct route from fire station number three, I believe down sixth Street to Queens Road and in the back it's just a far more feasible route. Going through Alva Dora to the side of the property that has ultimately the largest demographic of elderly residents, it slows things down and I don't feel that's fair. I wouldn't ask that for anyone with an elderly parent or even our children if we're stuck somewhere and we can't get to help. We want to take care of our family and our loved ones regardless of their age.

(00:37:00):

If we do install a gate, it is a fair housing issue. We have to make sure that we have a fob or something for all of our residents. So whatever we do for one, we must do for all which is fair and equitable. So to touch back off, if you're entertaining a gate, we do have to have something for everyone so each resident can access in and out. As discussed at the meeting with the residents of the neighborhood, we had talked about maybe just limiting that gate access as a compromise to just the residents that sit on the eastern edge of the property. Unfortunately Sarah, our regional manager, did check in and it's fair housing, so I wanted to be transparent and say what we do for one, we need to do for all. I hope that you will consider my residents whom I do care for very dearly and I do live with them. Please help us take care of all my residents from the little kids to my elderly residents and I hope that you will please help me do that. Thank

Speaker 2 (00:38:13):

You.

Speaker 9 (00:38:14):

I do feel all of those calls, so some of them aren't as friendly and pleading for help. Some of them are pretty straightforward and upset, so hopefully you will, hopefully you'll help them.

Speaker 2 (00:38:26):

Appreciate that. Okay, we'll open it now to general public comment and some of you have been through this before so you know the drill.

Speaker 10 ([00:38:47](#)):

Three minutes, right? Yeah.

Speaker 4 ([00:38:48](#)):

Yes.

Speaker 10 ([00:38:49](#)):

Okay. Good evening City Commission. My name is Tyler Cummins. I live at 901 Stone Creek Drive, which is lot one on Winthrop Court and Stone Creek Drive. Immediately adjacent to the gate that we're talking about tonight, I've sent you all numerous communications about my concerns most recently here on Sunday night. I'm just going to go over those briefly. Yes, the safety of my family and my neighbors family and our children are utmost important. The increased traffic that we received, not only during the

Speaker 2 ([00:39:21](#)):

Time, can you go ahead and address us?

Speaker 10 ([00:39:22](#)):

Yep. Not only the increased traffic, not only when the time when the gate was open temporarily but for the repaving, but for months and months there was increased traffic and the Queens Road assessment that was mentioned previously earlier are two three of my biggest concerns. I will like to address a couple of things that were spoken earlier in regards to taxes. I believe his calculations may have been incorrect when it comes to not their taxes but the taxes of those on Stone Creek because the assessment affected not only the folks on Stone Creek but on Branchwood Branchwood Court, Wheatfield, Fox Taste Drive, there was a large number. Hundreds of homes were affected by the special tax assessment that were specific to that stoplight that they want access to.

([00:40:14](#)):

I would also like to talk about the safety during inclement weather. I think that's a key point to discuss because I would argue that the during inclement weather, it's even harder to get from branch branchwood slash queens down to that back gate that is in question. Case in point, I emailed you pictures of A SUV and U-Haul that slid down the hill into my yard and rested against the fire hydrant, which could have been a thank goodness we have large curbs because that could have been a huge disaster with water spewing everywhere during the inclement weather and causing who knows what type of damage to not only my property but my neighbor's property. Ice do have damage to my property right now because of that accident that took place in my yard. Most of it I won't know fully until the snow melts and sprinkler heads need to be replaced, that sort of thing.

([00:41:07](#)):

You guys identified this as a major change, which is why is in front of you tonight. This is a major change for me and it would decrease the value of my property. For me, a fair compromise is just to honor the agreement set back in 2007, put up a gate that's accessible for emergency responders when it comes to intimate weather. My garage has a quick release. This gate should have a quick release where if it fails during inclement weather it can be opened temporarily. All we ask for is that when it needs to be open, there's communication from the property management to all of us and we will understand. Thank you for your time.

Speaker 11 ([00:42:03](#)):

My name's Eve Los, I live at nine 13 Stone Creek Drive. We did have a chance to meet with them and talk about what they were bringing up about the compromise. I want to stress again what we're talking

about changing was a compromise. We were originally in the neighborhood and met with them many, many times and talked through what would be a safe way to make this work and the gate, an electronic gate that could be opened by the property owners in an emergency situation, any emergency medical fire, any of those could open that and that was what was there. And for 16 years everything was fine until the repaving. So this is the first time we've heard this and we did see a significant increase in traffic and I get what they're saying about the fact that that was the only area, but we did see it and most of it was younger people and we get a lot of traffic walking in the neighborhood, which is fabulous.

(00:42:56):

We have people from the apartments that come over all the time and we welcome them. I know part of what was cited for this as a reason to do this was the positive neighborhood interactions. I'm sure I'm wording that wrong and I apologize, but we have positive neighborhood interactions, we have a lot of things that go well. We welcome them to walk their dogs to come through and Mr. Cummings was very modest in the fact of what he did for those people that slid into there because my husband had to leave his car at the bottom of the street because he couldn't get it up Stone Creek, so it wasn't a better access point. We had to go retrieve the car after some snow had actually fallen. And when that car ended up in there, they actually provided things for those families. We want to have a positive relationship, we just don't want the traffic.

(00:43:37):

It is a dangerous situation there to have that much traffic going through. And again, this was initially a compromise. So it's not that we're not willing to compromise. We already did. And I know they've said a lot of times that these things don't last forever, but you can't change the layout of the neighborhood to have a second gate. So I know that currently you require all new complexes to have two access points for all people, but you plan that so that it doesn't spill into a neighborhood. You can't change that. Now we have a neighborhood, there are houses there and when they have people going there, they should be upfront of the access point. So if people are upset, in my mind, if I were coming to view an apartment, I would want to know what my amenities are. So if those people are upset, they should have been made aware that that's an emergency access point and it's there for their benefit to help them as far as if an emergency happens that the fire department, the police, that ambulances could get that open.

(00:44:31):

And I was asking my husband because he works at a facility that has electronic gates and I said, well, in a case of a power outage, those have to be overridden. He said they should fail open or have some sort of a release so it would not be a problem there. And they should have hopefully the staff on hand to make sure that their residents are safe. And right now that gate is down and we have all been fine because it's an emergency so someone tore down that gate and that is fine because it is an emergency. So in the case of an emergency, we have no problem with having it up. We just don't want it to be a regular occurrence because if it breaks, that's a problem. Thank you so much. Thank you.

Speaker 6 (00:45:12):

Oh sorry, go ahead.

Speaker 12 (00:45:27):

Okay, sorry I had to bring my kids because my childcare couldn't get here from Topeka. I'm Abby Craig. I'm at 900 Stone Creek across the street from the gate that we're proposing or that has been there and has been removed. I sent an email. I just wanted to reiterate much like Eve did and I cried last time and I didn't want to do it this time. Dang it. We want the neighbors to walk. We love the pedestrians. My kids love to see all the dogs. My dogs love to meet all the dogs. We welcome the residents of the apartment complex. But my number one job is to protect my kids and the only way that I can do that is to limit vehicular traffic. And that's what I'm here to do. And I want to say major props and thank you to the

residents who were here before we were for working out this compromise because that was honestly, it was a selling point for us buying our house.

(00:46:21):

We wanted a slow traffic area because we knew that we would have kids who like to ride their bikes and we ride our bikes to school and we ride our bikes down the street. He got to go cart for Christmas, Lord, save us all. So I just wanted to reiterate that because apparently it didn't seem clear to the residents from the last meeting that we want them here, we welcome them to our space or to the city. It's not like we're trying to lock them into the apartment complex. I don't want them, I'm a human. I want them to have access to emergency services whenever and however, if they could let us know if they're doing the floor or not. The floor, the parking lot again, great Branchwood Villages notifies us all the time that they're doing a controlled burn. It's not that hard to stick a letter on somebody's doorknob. We're understanding neighbors. I think so. I think that's all that I wanted to say. Put that back. Thank you. Thank you.

Speaker 13 (00:47:34):

Hello again. Kevin Los nine 13 Stone Creek, one of the original homeowners on Stone Creek, one of the homeowners that was here when we first came up with this compromise in 2007. There was a comment when we were meeting with them here a few weeks ago that they heard me say last time, I'll see you again in 20 years. Like that was a flip comment and I don't think that's a flip comment at all. When you're a homeowner, you have to do everything you can to protect your rights. We did it in 2007. I was right here. We did in 2024. I was right here. I can't help it if other people are not here or not, but things haven't changed and we worked very hard for that gate as a compromise and I don't know what else would change from that. And what has materially changed that would alter the need to change that?

(00:48:24):

And I'm not going to be exact because I wasn't part of the planning commission, but I think roughly 20 years ago is when we really started to do more of this mixed use development, especially out west. We wanted to integrate densities throughout. We have apartments, we have what would've been duplexes behind it. We actually fought for those to be just rancher retirement homes and we have neighborhoods and I think you can scan everything throughout the city and you'd find it very rare. I found one case when I was looking over the map last night where you have an apartment complex that would have a direct access into a residential secondary street, one that wasn't even plowed until 10:00 AM this morning. So it tells you kind of where we fall in the pecking order. That is not something that was ever intended by the mixed use.

(00:49:08):

We have a gate, it's there for emergency. It was maintained for a while. I say it wasn't maintained. It was new for a while when it fell into disrepair, it wasn't maintained by the previous property owner. The new property owner never did. It was padlocked. That was never the intent. It was supposed to have an electronic release. The emergency vehicles, they all were part of that initial compromise. They had access to it. You've heard all that recent storm, you've heard our street was far worse. So that's not really a good reason. Nobody's questioning safety, nobody's questioning or trying to lock anybody in.

(00:49:45):

You have the right to get out. You have emergency services if you need 'em, property tax, that's kind of a bogus answer. We pay, he'd almost \$7,000 on my property. There's almost 20 households just on Stone Creek alone. I guarantee you we pay more property tax than the half of the Alva door residents that say they're going to use this. So that's just kind of a non-starter. I don't know that there is another compromise given that this was the original, the gate is a must, whether there's some other secondary compromise on an exit only or whatever, I guess you guys can talk about that. But nothing's changed since 2007.

Nothing's changed since we care to be here in 2024. Nothing's changed right now and I don't know why things change, but I don't know what this does. So thank you.

Speaker 2 ([00:50:43](#)):

Any further public comment in the room?

Speaker 14 ([00:50:55](#)):

Hey, Corby Rust with Land Plan engineering and I was a part of the original application back in April and I just want to reiterate what was said about the traffic impact study and it was minimal impact on this road. It's going to take into account the type of road neighborhood residential. It doesn't look at it as a collector or major arterial and it was very minimal impact. Again, small complex compared to these larger complexes that would empty onto a larger type street. I'm a part of the planning process for the city every day. Connectivity is a big word. The second entrance increases connectivity. It's something we do again every day. An example that popped into my head is we have a high school down the street from my neighborhood that would certainly generate more daily trips into a neighborhood every day than this one. Far more. And it works, it's safe and it's a bunch of ding bad high school kids. So I think in this case, again, very minimal impact on the surrounding neighborhoods. Thanks.

Speaker 15 ([00:52:21](#)):

Hello, I'm Josh Locke, my family. My wife and I have two young kids and we live at 9 0 9 Stone Creek. I just want to speak about my daughter who's eight now at seven years old. She was the one that basically notified us of the increase of traffic. She talked to my wife and said that Mom, where are all these cars coming from? And it was just that. It was the gate had open, it was a very noticeable increase in traffic on our street. And my young kids, they like to play basketball ride bikes and it's something that I believe will impact our families and our houses and put an unnecessary risk to our kids. Alright, thank you. Thank

Speaker 2 ([00:53:04](#)):

You.

Speaker 16 ([00:53:10](#)):

I'm glad I got here in time to see the lay of the land because it's interesting how money plays such a role in this town. Stone Creek is considered a well to-do neighborhood, just one cop tonight. Interesting. But obviously these folks have more money they got on the consent agenda. Well sorry, we're not on consent, but obviously I'm hearing it really sounds like these folks over here have the most money because we know that the most money really is what makes things happen in here. These folks over here are telling you what they're really experiencing. These folks have done their planning and land plan has, I don't know, he doesn't like high school kids, but these folks over here are telling you what's happening in their area. Are you going to pay attention to 'em?

([00:54:06](#)):

And then personally, I wouldn't trust a lawyer that, I mean his wife told me he's doing divorce law. I don't know what we're doing here, but that was a slight, but it was interesting. But these people over here are telling you what they're experiencing in their neighborhood and these people over here are telling you what they have planned for that neighborhood. How about you listen to the ones that are telling you what they're experiencing for once? That's what we've been doing in here for quite a while is telling you guys what we've been experiencing in this town, but instead you guys go with what your plan is. Revisit experience a little bit later. I don't want to get thrown out for going too far off topic, but your homeless people are in the same situation. They don't listen to experience

Speaker 2 ([00:54:52](#)):

Any other public comment in the room? Is there any public comment online? Sherry?

Speaker 1 ([00:54:57](#)):

We do have a,

Speaker 2 ([00:54:59](#)):

Okay.

Speaker 1 ([00:55:13](#)):

Addison Kegan Harris.

Speaker 17 ([00:55:18](#)):

Hi there. Addison. Keegan. Harris. My pronouns were she, her and hers and I'm a resident of Alva Dora, so 55 55 West sixth Street. I sincerely appreciate the commission to taking the time and I'm also very grateful for RONA and our property managers for dedicating their resources, not only time but financial to advocating for myself and my neighbors. I'll be quite honest, I'm a little bit flabbergasted that I'm flabbergasted because it feels right at face value. Last summer, maybe it was the summer before when the gate was removed and then suddenly a loft was put on the gate, not put on the gate by our property managers but by someone in the neighborhood. It's very difficult to have that be the experience and then to hear people say we want them here, there is a whiff of classism. There is a whiff that those of us who rent don't deserve the same rights or the same access to our community as those who own. I think we can look at many of the different systems at play, both in Lawrence and Douglas County, in the state of Kansas and the United States that inform who does and doesn't get access to land and space. And I would ask the commission to not only consider that historical context, but the fact that Mr.

([00:57:12](#)):

Low's mentioned that nothing has changed since 2007. I think that's hardly the case with nearly anything. I am cynically grateful, I guess that the neighborhood folks want us and our kids and our dogs to visit, but I would consider and ask those of you who are in the room, what does it mean to you to be a neighbor if you are not willing to make a compromise now 18 years after an initial agreement was come to is that really what being a neighbor is? I would also ask the commission to consider following its own current standards for new developments and also to look at the evidence displayed and presented by Mr. Rust and the others earlier who spoke about traffic impact and the fact that the city staff indicated that they don't have a position on it because it wouldn't be a major consequence. This is in fact an opportunity for you all to be excellent parents to your children and to talk about what it really means to be a neighbor, how to be safe, how to play basketball, how to ride your bike safely with traffic. Thank you.

Speaker 6 ([00:58:29](#)):

Chris? I yield

Speaker 1 ([00:58:34](#)):

Chris Flowers.

Speaker 18 ([00:58:38](#)):

Hi, this is Chris Flowers and I'd like to just, I joined in kind of late so I'm not sure if I missed any, what all I missed. I was just wondering can you open the gate and keep a traffic count and see if the traffic is

actually that bad? Usually when people are doing the limiting access, it's to the Schwartz Road. That wasn't to keep a neighborhood out. It was to keep the traffic from sixth Street from using it as a shortcut. But what I've been hearing, it sounds like it's not a shortcut for traffic on sixth, it sounds like it's about limiting access for an apartment. People live in an apartment, so it's just one part of a neighborhood and that's kind of fishy to me. And I want to talk about Gates as a delivery driver. I was delivering to an apartment complex and the exit gate quit working and I had to sit there and wait until someone came through the entrance and then go through that.

(00:59:47):

So I am totally on the residence side. Are we talking about there's just one entrance to this apartment complex? I think it'd be a lot safer to have two entrances, especially when you're talking about emergency services and how many accidents have there been involving the kids. I mean, I'm hearing that we need to keep the children safe, but what's the actual data on the accidents that have been going on there? Because I think it's just parents overreacting. I don't think the data is, I think the data's going to support the apartment complex in that opening. That gates not going to actually have that harmful of an impact. It's just going to increase some traffic. But I just like to say, I don't think should children be playing in the streets? Should a kid have a go-kart going around in the streets? I just want to throw that out there.

(01:00:50):

There are ways to prevent cars from hitting kids and one of those ways is keeping the kids out of the streets. Let's see if I have anything else. And also I want to touch up about the compromises was in 2007, but that's over 15 years ago and things are always changing. Our safety protocols are changing, like what you did with mastery to make it safer for bicyclists, I think I would open up the gates and do a traffic count and see if it meets standards for being unsafe and then go from there. If it turns out it is actually a problem. Thank you.

Speaker 1 (01:01:54):

Kathy. Rod? Sorry, mayor or vice mayor.

Speaker 2 (01:02:09):

I'm not sure she's brought over yet.

Speaker 1 (01:02:10):

Yeah, Kathy, if you want to provide public comment, you'll need to accept the invitation to be promoted to panelist. I'll come back to you. Jeffrey Hepler.

Speaker 19 (01:02:43):

Hey, evening y'all. Thank you for the recognition. Sherry. Good evening commission. I want to start off by meaning, no disrespect to anyone, especially those parents that have presented their comments this evening, but I do want to specifically thank Addison for her comments in providing those initial question, is there going to be a separate pedestrian access? Were there to be a gate since folks are welcoming those into their neighborhood. I heard a lot about, I didn't hear a lot about, I heard several compromises from an individual where this gate to be an open access and looking at the map, there's a single little lane in between the east and the west side of that complex. Folks that live on the east side are going to go through the east side. Folks that live on the west side are going to go through the west side. I heard there is demographic information that most of those people that live on the west side are elderly. I don't think we ought to worry about them going too fast. And even if not, we can put in a speed bump before the entrance. After the entrance, put a sign up, slow children at play. There are many strategies that can be utilized to alleviate the concerns of everyone. That's all. Thank you.

Speaker 1 ([01:04:37](#)):

Kathy. Rod Key.

Speaker 20 ([01:04:39](#)):

Can you hear me?

Speaker 1 ([01:04:40](#)):

Yes.

Speaker 20 ([01:04:41](#)):

Thank you. Sorry about that. I come at it from two different sections here. My mother lives in the apartment complex. She's the oldest one living there. She's in her a hundred fourth year. She is independent living. She is an author. She just published another book. She had a stroke last May and she came out of it just fine. But the fire department and the ambulance had trouble getting to her apartment coming all the way through because she is on the east side. That's my number one concern. At the same time, I was the manager of Village Cooperative before it became Branchwood and we did a street study when we put in the co-op up there and the Branchwood Road, which we extended, we paid for the extension of that road when the study was done, said that it would alleviate traffic on Stone Creek, Wheaton Branchwood because it was a shorter distance for people to get to sixth Street instead of going down Stone Creek to get to the other entrance.

([01:05:46](#)):

So I agree with the land plan gentlemen that did the study. There are very few people on the east side of the apartment complex that are younger. We have more trouble with delivery, food delivery and so forth, people coming through and racing their cars through the complex than we do residents. I would just like it to be considered, I understand how the residents feel, but you weren't expecting the co-op to be there either. Things do change in Lawrence and the one thing that I don't think has been mentioned, many of the elderly older, I'm an older, I'm a 75-year-old senior citizen owned homes in this town. Before they moved into the apartments, it was so they could stay in our community and I do appreciate the friendliness of the neighbors to the people that do walk. I do appreciate all that. So I can see it from both sides, but I really think this needs to be a compromise between the two. That's all I have to say. And thank you for listening.

Speaker 1 ([01:06:56](#)):

Denise Gossage? Yes. Yeah, you can go right ahead.

Speaker 21 ([01:07:15](#)):

Hi, I'm Steve Gossage. I live at eight 16 Stone Creek, which is right across the street from Winfield Court, has been said many times as neighbors. We're happy with emergency access, keep it simple, keep it reliable. That's been the course of action that we've had for many years here and it's been working and we are continuing to be in favor of emergency access through that south gate. We need to note though that there will be regular seasonal changes in the residency at the apartment complex. As the school terms come and go, people will come and go. Over time, the residents will move in and out at a greater frequency in the neighborhood, in the residential neighborhood, and that's going to mean more U-Haul traffic, more movie band traffic. So the traffic will be different.

([01:08:21](#)):

We'd like to ask also how the traffic study that was mentioned in the planning document that was done in November was done with the gate closed. I don't see how that informs how the traffic will be near term,

long term or with the gate open. As many of people have said over the years since the complex was built, it's been an emergency access only gate. The apartment ownership saw that gate into disrepair, unilaterally removed the gate, took it down, double swing iron Gate and replaced it with an orange snow fence, which has been there for quite some time. And that's the way it is now. We are all in favor of continued emergency access. No one wants more traffic through the neighborhood and we certainly thank you for your consideration.

Speaker 1 ([01:09:33](#)):

Curtis Copley.

Speaker 22 ([01:09:38](#)):

Hello, I'm Curtis. I'm a resident at Alva Dora, my fiance and I.

Speaker 23 ([01:09:47](#)):

Hi, I'm Jem.

Speaker 22 ([01:09:49](#)):

We do live on the east side. I just want to share a quick small story. One of our neighbors, her name is Pat. She is a very new resident to the apartment complex and I don't know exactly what her age is, but she is fairly elderly. She had a fall recently and emergency services had to come out due to the structure of the roads. They had a hard time coming around, so we actually had taken her across the bridge to the west side to actually work with the emergency services. It was quite a hassle. It made things very challenging. And so that's just a quick note. I worry about my neighbors. I also know that my fiance and I would love to have kids and we're planning our first kid and we would have our kid in this apartment complex. So we're very familiar with that idea. I come from a very large family. I am 33 now and I have siblings that are all the way down to 17 years old.

Speaker 23 ([01:11:14](#)):

And so we're not really against children or not uncaring of children playing in the street or anything, but I have driven down Stone Creek when the back gate was open and I drive slowly, there was really no one on the streets. I'm not saying that as a good argument, just saying that there are people that care, that know how to drive and relating to what the previous people have said. Us as residents, we respect our neighborhood and our neighbors and so we're not of those people to be driving through. And as Kathy had mentioned, it really is more delivery drivers because me watching out my window, I don't know some of these cars, but they are delivery drivers and they don't care. They're working.

Speaker 22 ([01:12:17](#)):

I don't know if there's a way to compromise to reduce delivery drivers or to cut those out because I do believe that is the traffic that is seen because those are younger people that are working. I do not think it is residents as a whole. Generally all our neighbors are very respectful and most of them on this side are elderly. So I think that's the issue. So

Speaker 2 ([01:12:43](#)):

Yeah.

Speaker 22 ([01:12:43](#)):

Thank you.

Speaker 2 ([01:12:44](#)):

Thank you.

Speaker 1 ([01:12:45](#)):

That's all the comments.

Speaker 2 ([01:12:48](#)):

Okay. I'll bring it back to the commission for questions or comments.

Speaker 3 ([01:12:55](#)):

I had one to start off with for the people in the apartment complex. So what I'm getting is there was an orange snow gate there for a while. I just was kind of curious why was there not the mechanical gate? What was the cause? I mean how long had it not been there and why had it not been repaired or replaced?

Speaker 2 ([01:13:24](#)):

You need to come up to the microphone to speak. Thank you.

Speaker 9 ([01:13:30](#)):

When the property was originally purchased, the hydraulic opening lever that swings the gate, both sides of the gate open, had fallen into disrepair. And we did not know this. It wasn't disclosed at the time of the sale. And to be quite honest with you, as a resident of Alva Door, I do live on the west side. I don't use that access. I didn't notice it until I became the property manager and actually started inspecting the property. It's a very heavy gate as most mechanical gates are. It hadn't been used if so very infrequently. It did have the fire department's safety lock on it that they can access, but it's very, very heavy and it had rusted. So even pulling it open was quite difficult and would fall back shut. Hence the reason when the parking lot was initially being worked on, we had to secure it open.

([01:14:34](#)):

Unfortunately after it was zip tied shut, someone had zip tied it shut and it had damaged it further. It had broken a couple of the brackets just due to the extreme weight on the hinge pins and we took the gates down and replaced it with a snow fence, which was temporarily. And it was discussed with Westcott with code compliance that there was something there blocking it, but also should emergency services need to get through, it was something that they very easily could either lift off or drive over in order to access that side of the property.

([01:15:19](#)):

Because we obviously did put something back up and at no point was Alva Ddo ever out of compliance. We had never received a fine or a notice of non-compliance. We were obviously compliant, but again, when I was originally had done the open records research, when we had originally talked about repairing the parking lot, the final development plan that I was provided by the city of Lawrence didn't include that small note to the final development plan. It was just the overall development plan that excluded or didn't have that footnote attached to it regarding the gate. So had we known that there was an issue and should you like to chat with Trinny Westcott, there's loads of communication where I'd reached out repeatedly and said, Hey, this is what we're planning. There's a gate here, it doesn't function. Is there something else going on here that we don't know about?

([01:16:20](#)):

And talking to the previous property manager said, yeah, it's always been closed, but I don't know. We didn't really know why and it was okay. And when I took over, we had residents that had some significant

health issues and as already discussed. So it became apparent that having a functional two entrances that were then code compliant, which we did not realize the code had changed over time, that the city of Lawrence does require two access points for any residence that's over a hundred units that are not fire suppressed. You have to have two access and egress points. So it became apparent that we needed to do something. And at that time, again, we didn't know that that footnote was on the final development plan. So we were under the assumption that we were complying with the city code fire code to make sure that those entrances, we had two functional entrances in and out.

Speaker 3 ([01:17:28](#)):

Okay.

Speaker 9 ([01:17:30](#)):

Does that answer your question?

Speaker 6 ([01:17:32](#)):

Yeah.

Speaker 3 ([01:17:32](#)):

Okay. It does. It does. I I had a question. Yeah,

Speaker 4 ([01:17:40](#)):

I wanted to tell you, I was looking at some historical aerial photos and the gate was there in July of 2023 and it showed the orange gate in September of 24. That's I think what you're looking for. So they took it down sometime between the summer of 23 and when they applied in April last time, I think.

Speaker 6 ([01:18:04](#)):

Okay. Can I add something to that

Speaker 2 ([01:18:07](#)):

Or not?

Speaker 3 ([01:18:09](#)):

No, I think

Speaker 2 ([01:18:11](#)):

If we have a question,

Speaker 3 ([01:18:12](#)):

Yeah, I'm okay for now. I'm just pondering Thank you though.

Speaker 2 ([01:18:15](#)):

Thank you. Kevin. Questions or comments? I guess I can start with the, to me this, I mentioned this last time in April of 24. I was on the planning commission in 2007 when this issue came up. And the issue was as most issues all at the time, how, I mean on one hand the developer, which is not the current owner, but the developer wanted to maximize the number of units they could get on this piece of property. And one option, the original option was to have two exits on the Stone Ridge and when you had, but you have

to have so much distance between sixth and Stone Ridge for that first entrance. And to do that, to have the two exits onto Stone Ridge, which would've qualified, you couldn't build as many apartments. And so by having the second exit where it is, you could build more apartments.

(01:19:20):

And so there was a discussion about do we have two entrances off Stone Ridge and less apartments or do we this as I recall it, or do we have the second entrance and have more apartments but have this entrance? And again, this was the compromise we talk about that some of the residents talk about. And the compromise was, well, we'll give you the second exit, we'll let you build more units, but there has to be a gate there. That was a choice from the people. That was a compromise made by the people who developed it and the neighbors. And we got this apartment complex as it stands today. So yes, certainly things have changed since the day it was built, but to me, me, when we pass a development plan that makes those sorts of compromises, I would have to have a really compelling reason.

(01:20:15):

I'm not saying there couldn't be a situation why I changed my mind on something over time, but I don't see this to be a compelling enough reason. As mentioned, it lasted for 16 years. The original owners never came and they knew they weren't going to come to ask and change that. The new owners I can see, I understand why the new owners and if I lived in the complex, I'd like to have that open. But on the flip side, the new owners are benefited from the fact that there's more units on this property because of that compromise. And it was of record at the time they bought it. There was a gate up when they bought it and they could have taken that into account when they purchased the property. So I don't see a compelling reason to change the development plan as it existed since 2007.

Speaker 3 (01:21:12):

Yeah, I was probably heading that weight as well in kind of what my question was about was the gate's been there for such a long time and then it's getting into disrepair. Okay. It's a part of the agreement that comes with the property. There are many properties around town that have agreements with it. And so why wasn't it repaired? Kind of was my thinking about it. So I can't really see any compelling evidence to go ahead and take it down. Our fire and medical spoke to it doesn't really matter either way. They still have the appropriate amount of access. It's, it seemed to be a part in functioning as a part of the plan for a very long time. So as Vice Mayor said, I don't see what material can make me move to change it.

Speaker 24 (01:22:13):

Yeah, I would go the same way. And I voted against the proposal in April I believe it was, and I didn't hear anything tonight that would change my vote. So I would still vote against the proposal

Speaker 2 (01:22:29):

Commissioner Sellers and Mayor Devo, any comments?

Speaker 4 (01:22:35):

I can chime in if you don't. It's okay. I agree with my fellow commissioners. I feel like the chronology was, the neighborhood was there first. The developer wanted to build the most dense possible complex. The agreement was such that we allowed that with only emergency access. These emergency access gates are in use in many places across the country. They use them in places like nursing homes all the time where ambulance are in and out of there many times a day. And there's usually not a problem. So I know the people that live there are concerned about their safety and I understand that is a concern. But what we need to be concerned about is the owners lack of repair of the gates and the lack of maintenance that might lead to potential, what might've led to potential problems in the past. And what we need to do is

just make sure we have an operating gate that is safe and accessible by emergency services as agreed upon originally and without any amendments. Because if anything, the neighborhood's gotten more dense since that time and I can't understand why we would want to change it this time.

Speaker 5 ([01:23:55](#)):

Vice mayor, I had one quick question before my comment. It was mentioned in several with several of the Ries that at one point there was a lock put on the gate when there was a gate there. Do we know who put the lock on the gate?

Speaker 2 ([01:24:16](#)):

Judy? Anybody

Speaker 5 ([01:24:17](#)):

Ever speak to that? I think there were assumptions made, but no one actually spoke to that. It was either the property owner or not. Who put the lock on the gate.

Speaker 2 ([01:24:27](#)):

Does the applicant? No, you need to come to the podium.

Speaker 25 ([01:24:37](#)):

So the gate was chained and locked and by the fire, the fire department had their lock on it. What happened when we fixed the parking lot, we opened the gates, we let the town, we let everyone under the sun know that we were doing this. We were closing the front entrance to get this done and opening the rear entrance during that time period while the front entrance was closed, a person from the neighborhood, our neighbors took zip ties and closed the gates and locked the entire community in. This went on for several days, they couldn't get out. And then this happened again. Again, same person who that was, that's up to them. But this was not something we did. This is the whole reason that the gates got taken down because we had someone coming onto our property and locking our residents in. That was the reason behind it. It has never been about the gate and disarray. It's not about the money. I assure you we've spent over half a million dollars on this property. I could care less about a gate. I've spent more of it on our attorney and other things. It has nothing to do with that.

Speaker 6 ([01:25:40](#)):

Thank you.

Speaker 25 ([01:25:41](#)):

And if we're mandated to put it, it's going to go back up. We'll do it. Whatever we need to do. It has nothing to do with that. We have a series of residents that some stories brought up, but I can say for my own self the main entrance coming down it and let's forget about this current snowstorm because we all know this happened in the last three times in the last a hundred years. It's any weather that's slick.

Speaker 2 ([01:26:06](#)):

Yeah, I appreciate that we answered the question. Thank you.

Speaker 5 ([01:26:10](#)):

Yes, and thank you. And I'll speak to I think what the Humphrey was saying to anecdotal and I do appreciate hearing some of the anecdotal stories from neighbors as well as from the attorney and everyone who spoke. One caveat, this is my first time hearing this, I was not here for the original, so the memo did a misprint that, but it said being five zero is actually four zero. I was absent for that meeting. And in reading the memo, I did want to look at code enforcement and what fire and medical had written in regards to that access point and gate and whether or not they could continue to do what they needed to do, whether or not there's a gate there or not. And so it seems like they're neutral on that as far as it means there's no preference.

(01:27:09):

And so knowing that and knowing that there's been, that there was a compromise between several property owners and now this is an opportunity to revisit the situation because there was a substantive change from the preliminary to the final that it would come back to us. And so I don't see where there is a need to change it based on that. I don't think it is. The change was substant enough to say because of this that the gate needs to be there or that because of there's no impact on traffic, the impact study on the traffic set, that it's minimal. And so I think that's the argument for and against as well. I think what concerns me a bit in this conversation is that many of the reasons brought up do seem to be a bit othering and several of the EE who are residents in the apartment complex spoke to that. And that is what's deeply concerning to me is that rationale for whether or not the gate should exist is othering those who live in the apartment complex from those who have homes. And my hope is that that language is not intentional and that this is a learning opportunity for our community. So when I hear someone say we appreciate those in the apartment complex, walking their dog in our neighborhood or walking in our neighborhood, the connotation there is that because they may be renters

(01:28:55):

That that means that their residency is temporary and therefore they cannot be vested in the neighborhood. The apartment complex is part of a neighborhood and I do believe that those who live within the complex, whether it's Alva Dora or Branchwood, and those who live in the neighborhood surrounding that area value safety. They value safe and secure. They value welcoming, strong, welcoming neighborhoods because they're a part of that. And so it kind of pains me a bit to hear constituents using that type of language to say that that is justification for why a gate should or should not exist.

(01:29:44):

So I think that bit's worth being discussed because it doesn't have any bearing on, I think on the bigger on what's to be discussed, I think it is a tone that can be taken to make one feel that they don't belong. And I could hear that in the tone of many of those who are residents of Alva Dora and what they've heard from several other riess who are homeowners in the neighborhood. And so it does hurt me and I'm sad that they had to hear that. And it is my hope that those who are homeowners in the neighborhood, that's not what their intent was. But as it is presented, I don't see a reason to make that substantive change. If the idea was to have, if the original was there to have that and that was the compromise at the original discussion and planning, I don't see a reason to change that. But I do see there's the opportunity for us to, outside of the purview of the commission, there's an opportunity for these neighbors to be more stronger and have some discussion about how can everyone make sure everyone is safe and feel like they belong in that neighborhood, whether or not if there's a gate there or not. Thank you to staff for presenting this and I'm glad we were able to hear from both homeowners and neighbors, but mostly community members who live together. So thank you.

Speaker 2 (01:31:20):

Thank you. Look for a motion then.

Speaker 24 (01:31:30):

Should I just approve the revised final development plan? Deny, deny, I'm sorry. That's right. Deny the revised development plan DP 24 1 0 0 5 for Aberdeen on six located at 5 5 5 West sixth Street.

Speaker 3 ([01:31:46](#)):

Second

Speaker 2 ([01:31:47](#)):

It's posted. And second. All those in favor say aye. A.

Speaker 6 ([01:31:53](#)):

Aye.

Speaker 2 ([01:31:55](#)):

None opposed. The denial passes five to zero. Thank you all for being here. We'll go move to, we'll let people exit here, ms. Okay. We're now moving to regular agenda item number two, which is to consider approving the RAISE grant application. And maybe I believe Evan is here to present that.

Speaker 26 ([01:32:42](#)):

I'm going to tee us up tonight, mayor, if that's okay.

Speaker 2 ([01:32:44](#)):

Oh sure. Go ahead.

Speaker 27 ([01:32:46](#)):

Alright, Melissa, before you go, are we, is Kurt pulling up the PowerPoint or does, do you want me to do that on my end?

Speaker 1 ([01:32:55](#)):

You can do it. You should be able to share Evan.

Speaker 26 ([01:32:58](#)):

Okay. And Evan, well I'm given my little promo. I'll let you do that. Does that sound good?

Speaker 2 ([01:33:05](#)):

Go ahead Melissa. Thanks.

Speaker 26 ([01:33:06](#)):

Alright, thank you. Melissa Steven, director of Municipal Services and Operations. I'm excited to be here again tonight to talk to the commission about the work our great team has been doing to work through the process to submit a RAISE grant application. We have been working for several months on this. It's about a 21 million Rebuilding America's infrastructure or with sustainability and equity grant. So that's what RAISE stands for. The alignment between our Raises grant and the requirements of the RAISE grant along with our connected city strategy is amazingly undeniable raise will help us achieve maintaining a functional and efficient infrastructure facilities and connecting and supporting accessible and sustainable methods for moving people. So that's what Connected City is and that's what RACE seeks to do. When

we came to you regarding our a transition plan last June, we stated that we would seek out grant funding this fall using the BUILD Kansas portal, which many of you are aware of.

(01:34:20):

It was noted that our a transition plan would be in complete alignment with raise, as I noted. And so our work began given our implementation timeline that we presented to you over 20 years for our a transition plan. This grant would not only reduce the cost to our community for implementation of those, a transition plan projects, but it would also speed up the implementation timeline. A true win-win investment in a DA sidewalks 88 bus stops, pedestrian crossings for transit stops, as well as filling in gaps in our sidewalk infrastructure will contribute to the wellbeing of our community and our built environment. The grant request focuses on persistent areas of poverty, which many of the America programs that we have seen come out under that COVID funding does focus on. We qualify as a rural community under a population of 200,000. So that's why we're able to make this request. We believe this application will move the needle on the percentage of sidewalks and shared usepa and compliance.

Speaker 24 (01:35:33):

Hold on one second. Something's going on out there throwing phones and stuff.

Speaker 26 (01:35:38):

I'm sorry.

Speaker 2 (01:35:38):

One second. Melissa,

Speaker 24 (01:35:41):

Can we have somebody check on that?

Speaker 2 (01:35:44):

Mike show everything's okay out there please. Michael, officer. Officer Finley, can you

Speaker 24 (01:35:56):

Just ask him to quiet downhill? Yeah, they were throwing phones.

Speaker 2 (01:36:22):

Okay. Are you ready for me again? I think we're trying to quiet down outside there, but looks like we're about ready. Okay, go ahead.

Speaker 26 (01:36:33):

Okay, thank you. So I also wanted to note that we did look at a RAISE grant last year as commission's aware for the Lawrence Loop. We are instead at this time just to remind the community of where we're at with the Lawrence Loop pursuing a comprehensive North Lawrence corridor study that was discussed with the governing body during the budget process this last fall. And the RFP has been completed. So it's a big deal. We're ready to now bring that to you all this week the connected City advisory board will be receiving a presentation on that corridor study and the process that it entails. And then from there it will be coming to the governing body. So I just wanted to cover that since Ray is the last time it was brought up was in the connection with the Lawrence Loop. We will be looking at the Lawrence Loop connection

through the downtown as an integral part of that RFP process and that plan for the North Lawrence area. And without further ado, I want to turn this over to Evan Corta to present our raise grant.

Speaker 27 (01:37:45):

Alright. All right. Thank you Melissa. My name is Evan Corin, I'm the city's a compliance administrator and today we're going to be talking about our project known as accessible connections to opportunities or we like to call it ACTO in response to the US Department of Transportation Rebuilding American infrastructure with sustainability and equity raised discretionary grant program. And so tonight we are asking for your approval to submit our application. So our project aligns with Connected City. Obviously City of Lawrence, having well-maintained functional infrastructure is pretty important to the overall goal of our strategic plan and our connected city outcome.

(01:38:34):

So some of the ACTO project goals, we believe this project allows us to jumpstart our non-motorized transportation goals for a accessibility, safety vulnerable road users and particularly students of all ages because of these existing planning efforts that we have. We believe our application is highly competitive and is very similar to the raise project that was awarded to the city of Topeka this past summer. And we think that we have a strong case as well. So when we look at our methodology, our application is being developed in partnership with our planning department, engineering staff, transit departments, recognizing our community priorities with the developed and approved plans that we have in place and that are mentioned on this slide. And really when speaking with Kansas Department of Transportation as well as our local infrastructure liaison, one of the things that they thought that really made Lauren stand out is we actually have approved community plans in place that have gone through robust community engagement and approval process and then we're applying for funding. A lot of communities do the opposite. They apply for funding and then they try to make a plan based on whatever funding they have. So we actually hopefully have a good leg up when it comes to our grants application process.

(01:39:58):

So a little bit about our statement of work or what ACTO hopes to accomplish. Like Melissa said, a compliance sidewalks and curb ramp reconstruction sidewalk and curb ramp infill. So areas where we currently do not have sidewalks, new pedestrian crossings and a compliant bus stop upgrades all throughout our project map. So a little bit about the project location. So as Melissa mentioned, Lawrence is actually federally designated as rural because under 200,000 and all the areas of this peach color are areas of persistent poverty as identified federally. And so you can see that the kind of dark pink is actually the project routes of our ACTO project. So all the pink areas there will be repair and reconstruction of all new a sidewalks and a a curb ramps. All the black little circles are actually bus stop improvements, bus stop amenities, a a accessible boarding and the lighting areas, other amenities that may come with those stops. And then the crosses are actually the T's I guess you could say are the crossing improvements we hope to do throughout this project as well. And then we put, you can see all those skinnier black lines, those are all the safe route school areas along this our project map as well. And then we also added in kind of an upcoming project there in green, which is the Mass Street multimodal improvements that will be happening hopefully in 2026.

(01:41:36):

So we're going to talk a little bit about some of the federal required grant merit criteria. So we'll walk through some of these and some in the slides up to come and kind of how our application aligns with some of these merit criteria. So when you look at safety of our project, so the project locations are all year left on the areas that our project will touch and whether they're on the high injury network, the vulnerable road user network, a safe route to school network. And then we also have K dots, vulnerable road user priority corridor as well. So you can see how highly some of these score in specific areas and how adding safety and accessible connections and better transit stops and crossing will really help with safety and

some of our connectivity improvements. And as you can see here, 177 crashes just from 2019 to 2023 and 11% of those involve people who either walk or cycle.

(01:42:42):

Here's another one just for safety. This is one of the four areas that we will actually be doing bus stop crossings at. This is at Bob Billings and Bristol Terrace. So this is actually the crossing kind of right at the entrance to the new central station. The posted speed of this corridor is actually 40 miles per hour, so actually having a signaled pedestrian crossing here will really help with the safety of this area. As you can see, there's some good pictures that they were able to pull from its cameras to actually get us for this presentation that shows, and this actually happens multiple times throughout the day where you have students trying to cross this area from this apartment complex or from KU walking down or vice versa. So definitely some safety improvements in this area as well. And then here we have quality of life.

(01:43:32):

So when we're talking about connecting people to things they need to thrive. So you can see again all of our project locations on our left as well as all the other opportunities that these corridors provide, whether it be to employment centers, to healthy food parks and trails, education, shopping and entertainment. And the more diamond shapes that you have, the more access you have to those opportunities in these areas. So you can see how by making these accessible connections and really trying to connect this corridor of our community, it really leads to some other opportunities as well as economic development when we look to improve these areas.

(01:44:13):

And then again, when we look at mobility and connectivity, again, all the locations and all of our project locations are on our pedestrian plan priority network and you can see actually what transit routes are along those areas and how many bus stops as well as average daily boarding. And you can actually see that Bob Billings station has 639 average boardings daily. And we think that multimodal connectivity and community connectivity through this project is fundamental in supporting our fixed route transit. We're trying to improve accessible boarding along routes that support Lawrence and KU Transit. And just in 2023 we had 2.2 million riders.

(01:45:03):

And so this next slide is just kind of a little snapshot of some of the condition that we're looking at. This is kind of one of our main stretches that we'll be doing along ninth Street, which again is on a safe route to school corridor. There's actually bus stops and actually a bus boarding across the street here. So you have sidewalks that are either in or shape inaccessible or gaps and this will be a major corridor we'll want to address, especially when we look at the closure of Pinky Elementary and a lot of the elementary kids are walking this corridor up to Hillcrest daily. So really making these improvements, that area would go a long way.

(01:45:46):

When we look a little bit about the project budget and what we're asking for when we look at the construction cost and what we're actually looking for as part of this project, the construction is 21, a little over \$21 million and it's a hundred percent federally funded and there's no local match for the construction portion. You can see that the city responsibility is for things like design and easements and kind of brings our project, total project cost a little over \$22 million. But the city responsibility would be for the design and the easement acquisition if needed. And we would actually be using some a transition funds as well as some other programs to tackle the design costs if we were awarded the construction portion of this grant. And one of the other things to note is the project team actually plans to divide this construction contract into two or smaller packages. One, it will really help us to make sure that we hit our construction timelines as well as allowing contracting opportunities through disadvantaged business

enterprise and actually giving opportunities to potentially other local contractors to help us get through this large construction project.

(01:47:05):

And so on this slide we just have some of our project timelines. So we are working through the application process and getting kind of everything buttoned up for our submission, which will happen at the end of this month. And then they will actually announce the awards, I think it's the end of June in 2025. So mid-summer of 2025 we'll know if we were one of the communities selected and how much funding we received. And then you can kind see some of the other phases throughout that. So if we were to be awarded funding, we would kind of further along the design phase. And then construction actually probably wouldn't start until about quarter one of 2027 is probably when the first construction would work because even after funding is awarded to a community, it takes a good another year before those to actually come through is what we had heard from the city of Topeka.

(01:48:02):

And then community support, here's just some letters of support that we have already received for our project. We've been doing a lot of outreach with a lot of our stakeholders, so just to name a few and we still have letters of support continuing to come in as we speak and we will continue to gather through those all up in time until our submission. But we just wanted to show some of the current support that we already have for this project. And then with that we have a team of folks on the call if you had any questions or anything about the grant that we'd be happy to answer for you.

Speaker 2 (01:48:43):

Thank you Melissa and Evan. Questions and look like we have any questions at the moment. I'm sure we'll have some comments, but I would open this up to public comment if any member of the public would like to comment on this item, you'd have three minutes.

Speaker 28 (01:49:13):

Thank you Vice Mayor, I'm Courtney Shipley. I just wanted to comment on something that's never been addressed in this body that I'm aware of and I don't believe there's any policy regarding it, which is the recycling of concrete or building materials. So in addition to this grant, which would if received, generate quite a bit of building materials which could be recycled, then you also have your already existing sidewalk program, which at this point probably generates even more. So where that material ends up is in our landfills and the taxpayer pays for that. That cost gets passed on to us. So if there is any way that this could be written in, I don't see the application actually in the materials. So if it's in there, I didn't see it, but it seems like a missed opportunity or a grave oversight if something like this were received and we had the opportunity to put a policy in place that requires our contractors to recycle those materials. Possibly it's a wash in terms of cost, but it is again, one of our sustainability is not just about walking and biking, but also about the kind of waste we generate. And we've talked for many years about how we're going to reduce waste in our landfills. Maybe that waste goes to a different landfill and not the closest landfill, but it still generates waste and the taxpayer should be concerned about that. Thank you. I hope you consider it.

Speaker 6 (01:50:35):

Thank

Speaker 2 (01:50:35):

You. No other comment in the room and you comment online.

Speaker 1 ([01:50:44](#)):

No vice mayor. Oh wait, sorry.

Speaker 2 ([01:50:47](#)):

Jeffrey

Speaker 1 ([01:50:48](#)):

Heppler.

Speaker 19 ([01:51:20](#)):

Here he is.

Speaker 1 ([01:51:21](#)):

Sorry Jeffrey, go right ahead.

Speaker 19 ([01:51:24](#)):

Yeah, my apologies. I canceled that first request. I just, man, what a great plan. What a great use of federal money. Give 'em all the money that we can. Don't have to match it. Shoot, keep buses free and thank you for bringing up Urbanite Courtney. That is, yeah, it doesn't go to the landfill. I'm sorry to say. It goes next to the Kansas River at the MCM Concrete Plant in their little dredge tank. That's all. Thank you.

Speaker 2 ([01:51:57](#)):

Thank you.

Speaker 1 ([01:51:59](#)):

That's all the comments.

Speaker 2 ([01:52:01](#)):

Okay. Bring it back to commission for questions or comments. And I guess Melissa, do we to Courtney's question on recycling if we need progress. Yeah,

Speaker 26 ([01:52:15](#)):

And I'm going to defer because we have a few others that have been steeped in all of the ins and outs of this grant. Jake Baldwin, Jessica Morten and Melinda Harker are online and if they know anything more that Evan and I wouldn't, I'm assuming that is something we can look into for sure. And we've been talking about that internally already.

Speaker 2 ([01:52:38](#)):

Did you want to add anything, Melinda?

Speaker 29 ([01:52:42](#)):

I would just add we are looking at ways to recycle materials. Concrete that doesn't contain a lot of rebar is better for recycling because we do have to separate those materials. The steel from the concrete that you're basically crushing into stone. When we have a spread out project, it can be challenging because

you have to figure out where you're going to do that crushing operations. So sometimes that is easier on a site at a facility than it would be in neighborhoods. But we can look at opportunities that we would have to recycle whatever materials available here. And we're kind of looking at that holistically anyway as we update our design criteria.

Speaker 2 ([01:53:23](#)):

Thank you. Questions, comments? I think this one thing I'd add, I mean since I've been on the commission, I know MPO and others, I've been looking at the sidewalk on the north side of ninth Street, which is right by my house on a very steep hill with a big retaining wall next to an apartment complex. And the cost per square foot of that particular sidewalk is pretty high compared to all the other sidewalks you're building in flat services. But I do think it would be well used, it's dangerous coming up and down that hill, but although I've been in favor of it, I've always been hesitant to support it because of the cost per square foot, which makes it a perfect project for the federal government to pay for because it really will have high benefit. It really will have, I think a lot of access.

([01:54:26](#)):

And Evan mentioned it since the change in boundaries. There was a lot more kids walking down ninth Street as I had to walk than there ever was in the previous 20 years I've lived in my house because of the way they shifted those boundaries. So I do think it's even more important now than it was when I joined the commission because of that change. So I mean, all the projects are good and obviously when we approved the A plan, it was daunting and scary and it still is. But boy, if we could get this award, it would move us so far ahead. So appreciate the effort and we'll hope for the best.

Speaker 24 ([01:55:11](#)):

Yes, I think this project is an excellent choice to go after using the raise. Grant, I appreciate staff's work on it. I know these grants are very tedious and very difficult to get, so I would just appreciate all your work on it and I think this is an excellent opportunity for us.

Speaker 3 ([01:55:34](#)):

Yeah, concur. I thank you for everybody's hard work on this and I love the areas that we're looking at positively affecting and I think this is a great opportunity for us and hopefully we get it. So

Speaker 4 ([01:55:53](#)):

Vice mayor, can I talk?

Speaker 2 ([01:55:54](#)):

Yes, go ahead.

Speaker 4 ([01:55:56](#)):

Hey, thanks for letting me do so I am really happy to look at the map and see the areas that would be able to impacted by this money. The only thing I noticed was there's not really anything happening in North Lawrence and I'm sure there's reasons for that and I know they have a lot less flat work and sidewalks and infrastructure because of the nature of a lot of the neighborhoods. But I also want to focus the attention on future applications on things like railroad accessibility and crossings and ways to facilitate bike access and pedestrian access as well up there because a lot of challenging sidewalks and accessibility issues there. And so I don't even know what the scope of this was and perhaps you limited to south of the river, but I just wanted to note that that was missing and I wanted to see that we could make sure we focused on

that part of the community in the future. But I love what you've done and I really appreciate the thorough examination and presentation. Thank you.

Speaker 27 ([01:57:04](#)):

And I could speak on that briefly when we looked at the areas that we were selecting as part of our project location is one is we wanted kind of overall connectivity. So how did these all connect to one another and really kind of make this network go Also kind of what areas were they in? So was it in an area of persistent poverty that's federally outlined in this grant application? And then really where did we have safe routes to school? Where did we have economic opportunities or job or job opportunities or things like that. And I do want just to be clear that even if we go after, and even if we get this raise grant, it will not stop the other standalone A projects that we'll be doing throughout the community. And some that are actually not listed on this map that we have in the hopper for 2025 are some of the East Lawrence. And you're right mayor, we will probably be in North Lawrence in the next couple of years just because of the condition of the sidewalks and then the areas that they're in. So again, this project alone doesn't stop some of the other standalone 80 a work that we'll be doing through the community.

Speaker 4 ([01:58:10](#)):

Thank you very much Evan.

Speaker 5 ([01:58:16](#)):

Melissa, thank you and staff for presenting this grant. I do appreciate staff taking the approach of seeing what partners name range communities are doing and saying, Hey, anything you can do, if we can do it or at least do it better than we definitely could in regards to grants, that's what we need to do. And I appreciate us taking the approach of not chasing money, but having a plan in place so that we have something that money will flow to. And that is with grants, it's usually easier if to have the plan and the money finds you then you chasing after the money. And then oftentimes what happens is that there's no plan in place and you actually end up giving money back. And I'm not in the business of giving federal dollars back, especially if we are taxpayers and we're utilizing it. So I do get that and I appreciate you guys putting that effort into it.

([01:59:14](#)):

Evan, I'm glad you clarified in regards to the looking at areas and ensuring that this was an area of concentrated poverty, which is a reminder for us and our community, but also just adhering to the federal standards. And I do appreciate the mayor bringing up aspects of North Lawrence and how do we ensure connectivity and that we can invest dollars in there and I think there very might well be opportunities for that to happen. And we voted on that as a commission with the budget to do that North corridor study. So again, as we invest money as a commission into ensuring that these studies are done so that we have the data and we can put a plan together to present for these federal dollars, it does make us make our community look more attractive to awarding these dollars and that they can see these dollars being done to good use.

([02:00:18](#)):

So Melissa, to your team, Evan, to the work you've done in bringing the A plan together and incorporating that into a comprehensive project that includes our sidewalks as well as other infrastructure projects we're doing, this is what government should look like and this is how we're maximizing federal dollars for the best benefit. And so this project recognizes that and I'm glad that we are going after these dollars and we're being aggressive about going after Federal dollar. So I look forward to, fingers crossed us giving an award on this and thank you for putting this together.

Speaker 2 ([02:01:00](#)):

Thank you everyone. I look for a motion then

Speaker 24 ([02:01:03](#)):

I'll make a motion I move to approve the Rebuilding American infrastructure and Sustainability and equity raise grant application

Speaker 3 ([02:01:12](#)):

Second.

Speaker 2 ([02:01:13](#)):

So first and a second. All those in favor, please say aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Passes 5, 2, 0. Thank you very much everyone for the presentation and putting that together and we'll anxiously await the determination. That brings us to item E, which is commission items. And I have one commission item. Hopefully most of you have seen that Senator Moran and representative, I'm drawing to blank, US representative has proposed turning Haskell's, trying to get Haskell, have a board of Regents to oversee their operations. And it's still in the very early stages, but I know that they are looking for support from community organizations and others to support that proposal. And so dunno if it's something that is interest to others, whether or not we could add that to our legislative agenda or if it's some other separate resolution or if we want to learn more about it. Just wanted to bring that up as something to consider.

Speaker 3 ([02:02:30](#)):

I'd be in favor of that.

Speaker 24 ([02:02:32](#)):

I'd like to hear more about it. Yeah.

Speaker 2 ([02:02:33](#)):

Okay.

Speaker 24 ([02:02:35](#)):

Others?

Speaker 2 ([02:02:36](#)):

Vice

Speaker 5 ([02:02:36](#)):

Mayor. I would like to hear more about it. I'm not of the mind of supporting it via resolution or by recommendation at this time.

Speaker 2 ([02:02:44](#)):

Okay. But are you willing to hear some more about it?

Speaker 5 ([02:02:49](#)):

I want to hear some more about it so that I can ask the questions. Yes, but I won't support a resolution or anything else other than that.

Speaker 2 ([02:02:56](#)):

Yeah. Okay.

Speaker 4 ([02:03:00](#)):

I'm happy to move forward with looking at it.

Speaker 2 ([02:03:02](#)):

Okay. Craig, is there something to look at some point? Absolutely. And again, I think it's in the very early stages and whether or not, I mean, I'm not sure if it's appropriate to hear about it now or wait until it's actually, I don't even believe they've drafted the legislation yet. So maybe find out more and then whenever staff feels it's appropriate to bring us more information, that's fine. I just want to do what we can to support task school. Okay. Other commission items?

Speaker 3 ([02:03:31](#)):

I have one. I just wanted to go ahead and thank staff like MSO, everybody for all their work during this storm. A foot of snow is a lot and everybody worked really, really dang hard to go ahead and clear the roads so that people could go ahead and get to their jobs or do whatever they need to do. But mostly they stayed home, which is great. But I just wanted to go ahead and extend that thanks to all staff. So they did a heck of a job.

Speaker 2 ([02:04:04](#)):

No question about that. Any other commission items? See none. Future agenda items? Any questions about that?

Speaker 4 ([02:04:19](#)):

None from me, sir.

Speaker 2 ([02:04:21](#)):

Okay. That would then see none. That would bring us to item F, which is the commission calendar. Any comments? Questions about the commission calendar? Nope. Nope.

Speaker 4 ([02:04:40](#)):

No sir.

Speaker 2 ([02:04:45](#)):

Seeing nothing on that does look like we have a little thing on the agenda here. We'll actually do. The live broadcast now ends, the remaining items are not broadcast on the YouTube channel and cable channel 25. So we'll allow a minute, allow that broadcast to end and anyone who wants to leave to leave. And then that brings us to open public comment. The public is allowed to speak on.