

Community Advisory Team Meeting #3 – Executive Summary

WESTMINSTER BOULEVARD DRINKING WATER PROJECT

Overview

The Westminster Boulevard Drinking Water Community Advisory Team comprises engaged residents and business owners who represent a diverse cross-section of the community. The team is working closely with the City of Westminster on key policy discussions related to the new drinking water facility. Group activities are limited to advising on matters that directly impact the community, including the appearance, aesthetics, and community amenities of the facility. The group shall have no legal responsibilities and is formed to give advice and recommendations and represent the overall viewpoints of the community and related stakeholders.

Agenda

Project: **Westminster Boulevard Drinking Water Project**

Subject: Community Advisory Team meeting #3

Date: [Wednesday, September 11, 2024](#)

Time: 5:30-7 p.m.

Location: Drinking Water Facility Site

- Food
- Welcome
- Project Update
- What's Next
- Facility Finishes Feedback

Meeting Notes

Project Update

The project team provided an update of the project, including supporting utilities. The project team gave a refresher on the 60% design set and discussed some of the technical elements of the design.

Supporting utilities

The project team showed a map of the supporting utilities and explained the realignment of the finished water line to 98th Avenue. The water supply line will be the first utility built after temporary power is installed. Construction is scheduled to begin in early spring and take around 18 months. The facility will follow, and the finished water line/sewer line will not be constructed until the facility nears completion.

For the finished water line, direct boring near Sheridan could start over the winter. The project team expects to complete the proposed finished utilities by summer 2028. They aim to have the water supply line and finished water line in place before the drinking water facility is completed.

Open Space

The project team gave an update on open space near the drinking water site. The three acres that are currently open space were originally part of a larger land acquisition for the construction of the Westminster Boulevard bridge and roadway project. It was determined that the remaining three acres were not needed after roadway construction was completed, and it was redesignated as open space in 2009. There are no existing plans to utilize the space, but the team noted that should a need arise, the land may be developed for public use in the future. If that land is redesignated, there will be a fund transfer. The CAT emphasized that transparency was needed during any fund transfer, and the project team agreed, noting that every fund transfer goes in front of our elected officials.

Cost estimate

The project team explained why they hired an independent cost estimator to double-check numbers and make sure the third-party cost going to be similar to their cost. The independent cost estimator is made up of former chief estimators for private construction estimation companies. They help ensure price comparisons because not many comparable large facilities are being built, and make sure the GMP is where it says it is.

Environmental Assessment

The project team explained that the EA is no longer being completed because the project is no longer seeking federal funding. They provided reasoning that the full NEPA process would cost more than the funds that have already been secured. Federal dollars come with a lot of paperwork, tracking, administration, meeting certain criteria, and there wasn't a lot of value added. The team noted that it's about 30% more expensive to do a federalized project. The city uses federal funds all the time, and it's often very worth it.

Despite no longer pursuing federal funding, the project team is still committed to best practices regarding environmental impacts, working with CPW and CDPHE and following federal wildlife acts.

The CAT also expressed concern at changing course regarding federal funding and asked for justification of the decision to no longer pursue federal funding. **The project team followed up with a correction** that WIFIA loans required a \$100,000 application fee, which would be applied toward the attorney's fee associated with a review of the contract loan documents. Westminster paid that application fee, but

were reimbursed most of that fee when the City decided not to pursue a WIFIA loan. The factors considered to use traditional bonding instead of Federal Funding or a WIFIA loan include:

- Changes to the SRF funding amount available for the project and changes eligibility criteria for loan principal forgiveness.
- Continued cost escalation for design and construction of the project.
- Potential additional costs related to construction and procurement requirements with federalizing a project.
- Concern that using multiple funding sources could affect the utility's debt rating and future borrowing capabilities.
- The opportunity for the City to earn interest on traditional bonding.

Concept renderings

The project team shared a 3D tour of the facility and shared a draft photo rendering of the building. The team then completed a red dot-green dot exercise around finishing options: color of the building, stamped concrete, fencing, and plants.

What's Next

The CAT asked about the timeline for construction and suggested that getting information out about those dates will be important for nearby neighbors such as the daycare and Hyland Village. They are hoping that there are opportunities for communities to start partnering with the city. There will be upheaval during construction, so how do we use that to help communities with things they'd like to see — a dig-once mentality.

Members of the CAT also said they appreciated seeing the positive impact feedback can have, noting that the team changed the waterline to a better location after receiving feedback.

Once the project team knows more about the construction timeline, they will share that with the CAT, and the fourth CAT meeting will discuss construction impacts in greater depth. The construction schedule will in part depend on the 90% design set and revised cost estimate.