

# REQUEST FOR ACTION

**Department Head**

Phil Kern, City Administrator

**City Council Date**

February 18, 2010

**Agenda Item**

Discuss 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue/Davidson Avenue Railroad Crossing.

**ACTION REQUESTED**

Staff would like to update the Council and seek direction on the 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue/Davidson Avenue Railroad Crossing.

**BACKGROUND**

Several years ago, Delano was part of a grant application – along with Franklin Township and Wright County – to upgrade certain rural railroad crossings west of Delano. The crossing at the intersection of 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Davidson Avenue impacts the City, as it has jurisdiction over part of that intersection. The challenging part of the intersection is that it serves as the intersection of two roadways, in addition to a railway corridor. Essentially, there are six directions of traffic (car and train) entering the intersection.

The proposed improvement involves the construction of crossing gates and crossing apron across the railroad surface. BNSF and MnDOT will be the parties involved in the construction, and the grant will cover 90% of the costs of the improvement. The local governments – Delano and Franklin Township – will be responsible for the remaining 10% of the cost (anticipated around \$15,000).

The area of the intersection is largely rural at this time, and may remain that way until market conditions dictate an expansion of urban services. The area is within the City's Comprehensive Plan and identified future growth. Also within the City's plan is a reconstruction of the intersection, as its current alignment would not safely accommodate increased traffic.

With a future planned realignment, staff is concerned that the construction of a formal railroad crossing under the current alignment could be problematic for future efforts. If the City's industrial or residential growth demand that the intersection/roadways be reconstructed in the near future, the railroad crossing would also need to be realigned/reconstructed at that time. Staff anticipates that the best case with this scenario would be expending funds to increase the size of the crossing arms and relocate them to fit the new road alignment. The worst case would involve a complete reconstruction of the crossing. Either way, staff anticipates this to be a very costly process.

As an alternative, staff is proposing the City consider working with Franklin Township on a partial intersection upgrade at this time to allow the gravel roadways to continue functioning as-is, but at the same time result in the railroad crossing arms to be placed in an area that's consistent with the City's future roadway plan. Staff has had preliminary conversations with Bill McMullen, Franklin Township Boardmember, and Lynn Liebfried, BNSF. Both have indicated a willingness to consider this proposal and work through any issues the alignment may present.

**FUNDING**

Staff anticipates funding for any improvements would be part of the 2011 Budget and/or the Northwest Industrial Park project.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- Area Maps